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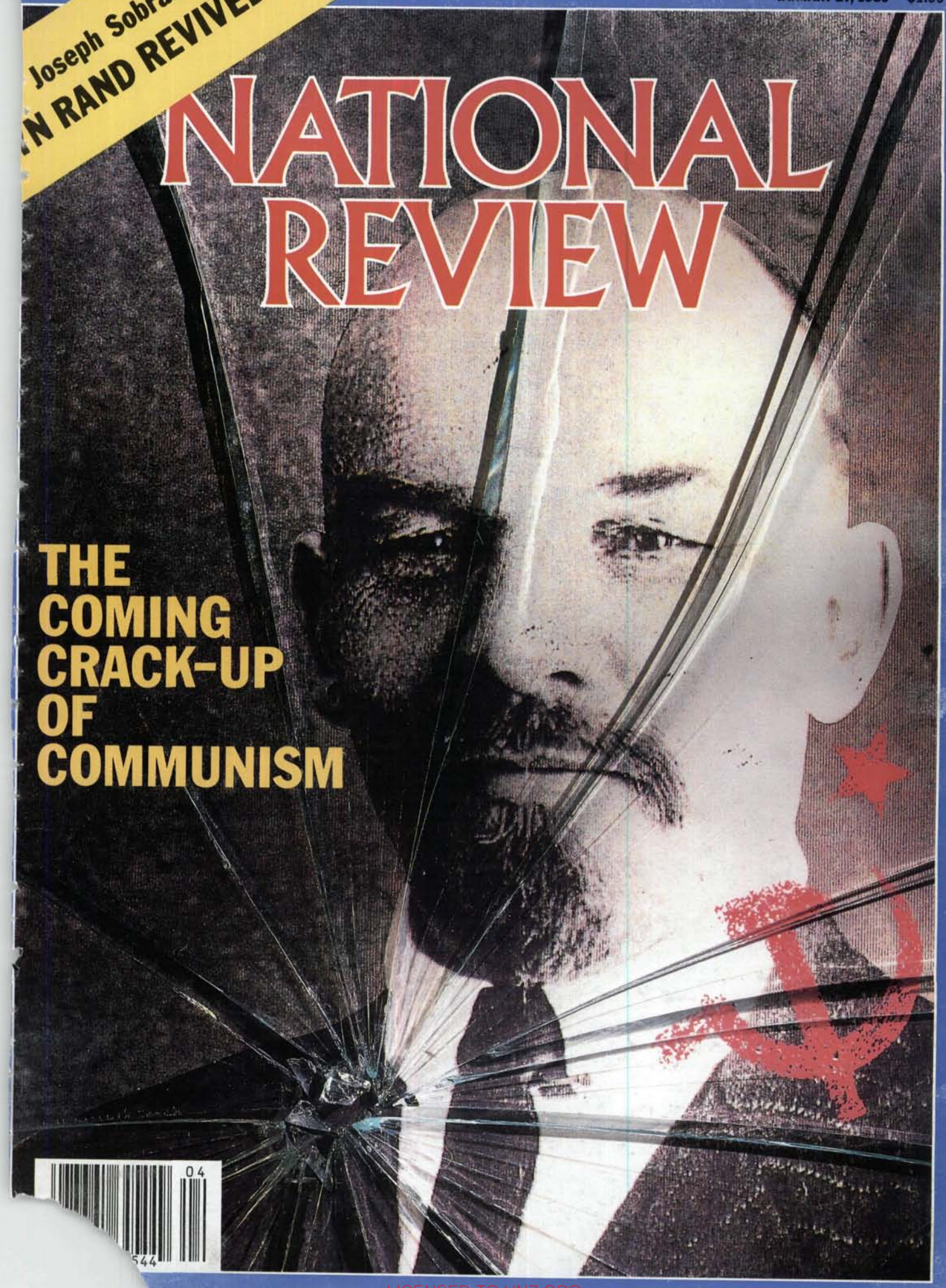
NATIONAL REVIEW



THE COMING CRACK-UP OF COMMUNISM

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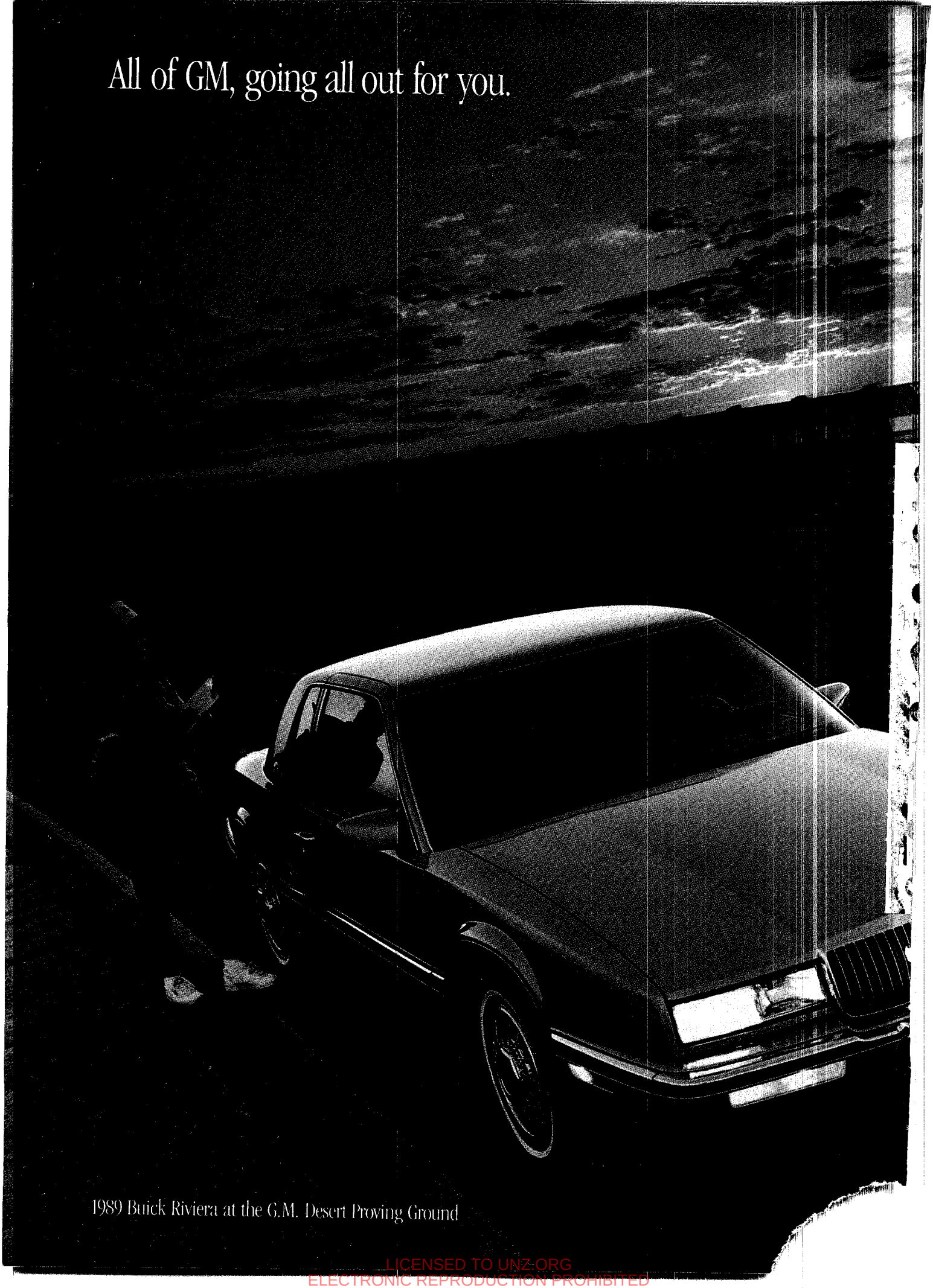

1989 Buick Riviera at the G.M. Desert Proving Ground

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"Good looking car, but my job is to test-drive it...see how she stands up to hard driving, weather, abuse, and lots and lots of miles. How she handles the curves, responds to all sorts of driving conditions. Out here, I'm looking for trouble...so that later our customers won't have any."

Fact: 3 GM makes were rated as the best-built 1988 American cars by their owners in the latest J.D. Power Initial Quality Survey, based on the first three months of ownership.

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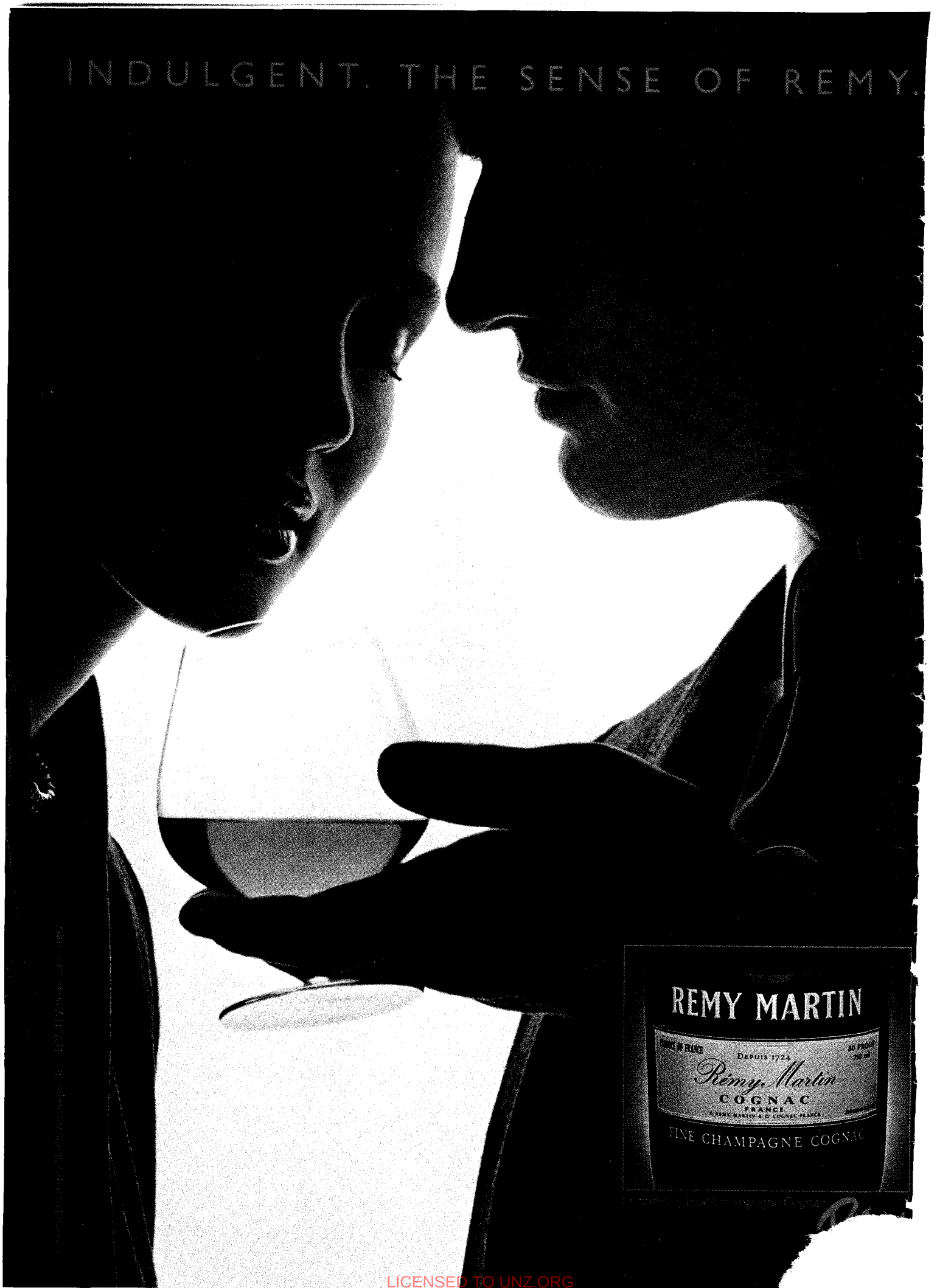

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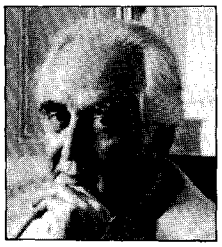
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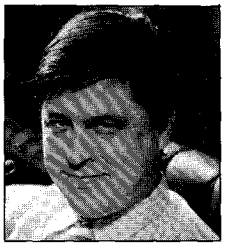
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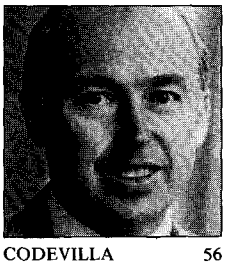
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COMMUNIST CRACK-UP

28 *Glasnost* and *perestroika* from above; unrest simmering and sometimes boiling up around the edges. As skillfully as Mikhail Gorbachev may deal with the situation he inherited, we may yet be seeing the beginning of formidable changes in the Soviet empire. **Radek Sikorski** offers an overall analysis of the crisis Moscow faces; **John Lloyd** and **Richard Grenier** report first-hand from Armenia and the Ukraine.

DEFICIT DEBATE

46 The experts, we are constantly told, agree that taxes must be raised to cut the deficit. Skeptical of results so convenient to media opinion, we asked six distinguished representatives of different economic schools to analyze the question: supply-sider **Robert Bartley**, liberal Keynesian **Robert Eisner**, monetarist **Allan Meltzer**, conservative Keynesian **John Makin**, "new classicist" **Robert Barro**, and British investment pundit **Brian Reading**—with a wrapup by **Alan Reynolds**. Despite stimulating differences of opinion, five of the six participants in our symposium agree: The deficit isn't a serious problem, though it does need reduction. The formula? Don't raise taxes, cut spending.

ARTICLES & COLUMNS

36 Now It Can Be Told
After 31 years, *NR*'s retiring publisher explains how he learned about direct mail, what "a couple of phone calls" means in the Buckley vocabulary, and what *NR* editors *really* think of the *New York Times*.
William A. Rusher

52 Mussolini Shrugged
We the Living, filmed in Fascist Italy and based on the Ayn Rand novel, is an entertaining reminder that there's more to Rand than a soulless dollar sign. *Joseph Sobran*

BOOKS ARTS & MANNERS

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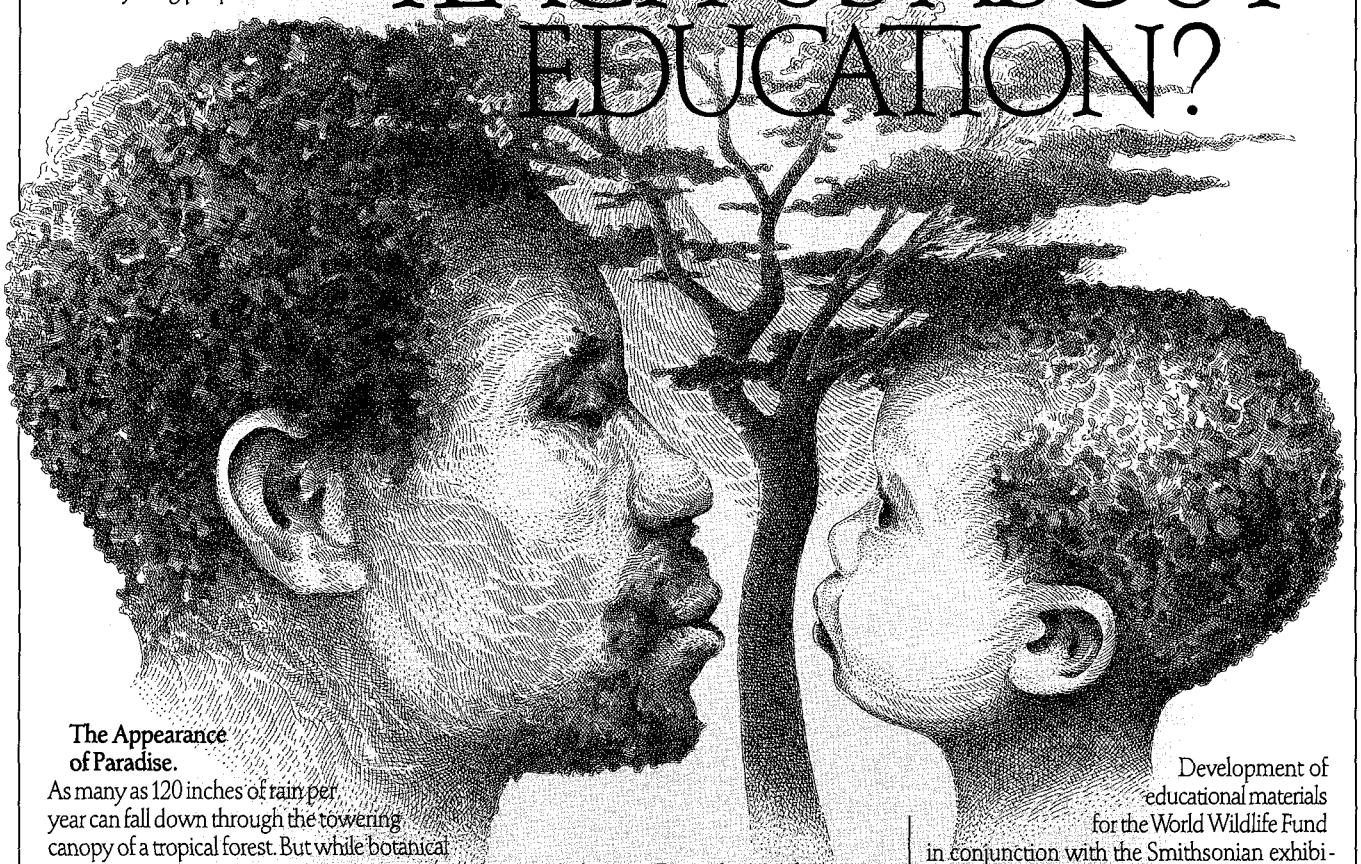
CAN SOMEONE WHO HAS NEVER SEEN A SCHOOL TEACH US ABOUT EDUCATION?

THEY CANNOT READ. They cannot write. Yet, the Baka Pygmies of Cameroon can teach us volumes about their rain forest home.

In fact, the average Baka's knowledge would rival a university degree. But perhaps the most fascinating thing we're learning is about learning itself. About a heritage of teaching. And passing on of knowledge. Because while it may seem an unlikely source, the Baka people and their ways could prove helpful in our search for more effective ways to educate young people.



The Appearance of Paradise.
As many as 120 inches of rain per year can fall down through the towering canopy of a tropical forest. But while botanical riches abound, the animals are elusive. The vegetation is often poisonous.

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Enlisting the chemical defenses of the forest is the genius of the Baka. Children quickly learn how to locate and prepare certain poisons to paralyze fish.

How to crush certain seeds, making lethal paste to tip their wooden arrows.

How to extract substances from the forest for a variety of medicines. And how to identify by name hundreds of species of trees and plants.

Handed Down From the Minds of Their Parents.
A Baka father carefully explains how a chimp hunts termites.

"A chimp gets the termite out with a leaf stem, like this. The termite hangs onto the stem and the chimp eats it."

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And now a compelling new National Geographic Special on Public Television.

Baka: People of the Forest. Produced by the National Geographic Society and WQED/Pittsburgh. Underwritten by the people of Chevron. It will air Wednesday, January 18th. Be sure to check your local listings for show times on PBS.

Then, watch a faraway culture approach education as a matter of survival. And consider the value of a similar approach back home.

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People Do.

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LETTERS

Capital, Not Charity

When I first moved to New York City, the overwhelming number of homeless people I saw truly appalled me. Friends would say to me: "Don't worry, you'll get over it." I haven't gotten over it.

Most of the thousands living on the streets are caught in a vicious circle: they cannot get a job unless they have a home; a home unless they have a job. And yet presumably many of them have the ability to work. Almost daily I see subway-riders hustled by a man dressed in dirty, smelly rags, but who, if he could break out of that circle, could peddle stocks on Wall Street or televisions at Macy's just as easily as sympathy on the IRT.

All the government funding in the world would not help him, because the bureaucracy is too big to care, and has no interest in trying to make him work. As M. D. Aeschliman quotes Clarence Jordan (co-founder of Habitat for Humanity) as saying ["No More Shacks," Dec. 30], "What the poor need is not charity but capital; not caseworkers but co-workers." With greater private support for Habitat for Humanity and other groups whose aim is to get the homeless to provide for themselves, we may some day see the guy on the subway taking over Nabisco as opposed to taking over the street corner, not only because he has a home but because of the self-esteem he gained in earning that home.

Daniel Bloomberg
New York, N.Y.

The Bonfire Burns On

Cato is wide of the mark in his "Letter from Washington" of December 9. In his geographical observations on racial voting patterns, Cato suggests that diminution of racial tension will enlarge black support for Republican candidates. Unfortunately, racial tension is unlikely to wane as long as the racial spoils system prevails. The persistent black voting pattern and the rhetoric of black leaders clearly indicate that the black political agenda consists of quotas, group rights, and a statist and race-conscious approach to social problems.

GOP capitulation to the niggling, hypocritical morality of the Left will not significantly augment the party's black support—the Democrats always have another forty acres and a mule in their bag of promises. It will succeed only in sullying Republican principles and alienating white voters. For a true Republican majority built on black votes, it is the thinking of black voters that must change, not the beliefs of Republicans.

David Pettey
Forth Worth, Tex.

The Arafat Shuffle

The "new cards" that have been dealt by Yasir Arafat and his PLO ["What Palestinian State?" "The Week," Dec. 9] may look different, but the result is still a dead hand. Arafat's public-relations offensive is not a step toward realism. Rather, it is a shrewd gamble that the incoming Bush Administration can be gulled into pressuring Israel into suicidal concessions.

The poo-bahs of the UN and the media have bent over backward to perceive moderation in the PLO's deliberately ambiguous pronouncements from Algiers. But the proclamation of this "state" is not progress, because no "permanent solution" to the conflict can be based on the further partition of Palestine. That is a formula that has been tried twice—1922 and 1947—and failed. Forcing Israel to surrender land that is the heart of the Jewish homeland will not buy peace.

Jonathan S. Tobin
Franklin Square, N.Y.

Robb's Record

Gentlemen, *please* set the record straight. Lest any of your conservative readers think Senator-to-be Chuck Robb is "moderate to conservative" ["For the Record," Dec. 9] and mistakenly applaud his well-marketed image (designed to catapult him into a Democratic presidential nomination), they must be alerted to his left-wing positions on a number of critical issues.

For starters, Robb has said that it is irresponsible for anyone to say, "No new taxes." He is on record as supporting a fifty-cent-per-gallon gas-tax increase, although he would not sponsor this himself. On social issues, Robb and his wife (LBJ's daughter, lest we forget) both supported the ERA, and Robb says not only that he is "pro-choice," but that he cannot think of any circumstances in which abortion should be restricted.

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While governor, he signed legislation for taxpayer-funded abortions, and currently supports such measures. And he accepted responsibility for the largest death-row prison escape in history.

Robb may favor research on SDI, but he's not sure about its deployment (the classic copout). Although he may approve of a six-hundred-ship navy, to do otherwise would be political suicide, since the economy of Newport News depends heavily on the ship-building industry.

The Chuck Robbs of this world facilitate acceptance, by Reaganite Democrats, of the Jim Wrights and their policy positions. The success of Robb's conservative image paved the way for the current liberal-dominated Virginia legislature and administration. Many of us believe that Robb, who is *not* a native Virginian, has never fully adopted our Southern culture or our time-honored Virginia principles, including that of a limited government which does not attempt to be a panacea for social ills. Virginia conservatives are no fans of Chuck Robb.

Anne Marie Morgan
Chesterfield, Va.

Junking Junk Bonds

I do not understand your sudden editorial enthusiasm for junk-bond financing ["Merger Maniacs and Junk Journalism," "The Week," Nov. 25].

The engine driving junk bonds is the tax system. Given the post-1986 lower rates on ordinary income and the abolition of a lower schedular tax on capital gains, the old strategy of holding stocks for gradual appreciation is no longer more attractive than holding for current income. If investors demand that corporations pay current income, the tax advantages of paying interest rather than dividends are dramatic. For the investor to receive an after-tax $100 return from interest, the corporation must earn about $140; the comparable figure on a dividend is $225. This distortion can be ended either by extending the double tax on corporations and investors to interest, or by eliminating the double tax on dividends—preferably the latter.

Junk bonds are becoming the new equity, but a very volatile equity. Sooner or later we will have a recession, because continuing good times will result in a generalized loss of discipline among managements, labor, investors, and consumers. In a recession it seems certain that many junk-bond issues will be forced into bankruptcy by their inability to pay the interest. Not even in the 1930s did we have whole sections of the economy operating under the direction of bankruptcy courts. Unless one has a far higher degree of confidence in the ability of courts to order economic life in this country than seems justified by experience, some viewing with alarm seems sensible.

John J. Slain
Professor of Law
New York University
New York, N.Y.

Diem's Final Journey

My compliments to Francis X. Winters for his intriguing exposé concerning John F. Kennedy's part in the coup to oust South Vietnamese President Ngo Dinh Diem ["They Shoot Allies, Don't They?" Nov. 25]. However, his contention that "Diem, offered asylum, . . . preferred death to dishonor" is arguable.

According to Stanley Karnow, author of *Vietnam: A History*, the rebellious generals, unaware of Diem's whereabouts but in contact with him through the presidential-palace communications system, offered Diem and his brother, Nhu, the opportunity to leave the country unharmed if they capitulated. The brothers agreed, and disclosed the location of their church hideout in the suburbs of Saigon.

Unfortunately, the generals had neglected to make transportation arrangements for Diem and his brother, and, furthermore, were unsure as to where to send them. They could not go to the U.S. because, as Karnow points out, "the Kennedy Administration, fearful of their embarrassing propaganda potential in the United States, would not give them asylum." Until a safe haven could be determined, the generals decided to escort the Ngos from the church to their staff headquarters in Saigon.

When an armored personnel carrier and four jeeps containing soldiers arrived at the church to fetch the brothers, Karnow claims, "Diem appeared to be disappointed that a limousine befitting his rank had not been dispatched." The Ngos never made it to staff headquarters alive, for one of the generals, to the amazement of his insurgent comrades, had made secret arrangements to murder them *en route*.

On the broader question, Karnow describes Roger Hilsman's recommendation that the Kennedy Administration encourage a coup to overthrow the uncooperative Diem as "a proposal whose significance far transcended Vietnam. For it meant, in theory at least, that the United States reserved the right to manipulate a dependent government that failed to conform to its standards."

J. Scott Nash
Boynton Beach, Fla.

Anti-Semitism in the Quad

Milton Himmelfarb has been the true prophet of American Judaism for his entire career, and his message has never carried a greater quotient of wit and truth than in "Jackson, the Jews, and the Democrats" [Nov. 7]. Still, liberal Jews' craven capacity to forgive when no one asks for forgiveness—let alone repents!—has found its match. Anti-Semitism is now being made respectable through toleration of racist bigotry—except when directed against blacks—as displayed by the liberal public-policy apparatchiks in charge of major universities. Carter Administration leftover Joseph Duffey, Chancellor of the University of Massachusetts, has just spent $10,000 of Commonwealth funds to bring Louis Farrakhan to his campus. Howard R. Swearer, lame-duck President of Brown, concluded his term by bestowing an honorary degree on Gore Vidal, of all people. So let's share the shame, and assign to the Jewish Left no more than its fair share.

Jacob Neusner
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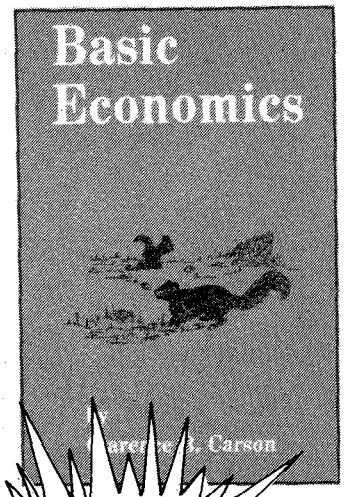

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FOR THE RECORD

Ring Out, Ring In: **Ronald Reagan** will leave office with a 63 per cent popularity rating, the highest for any President since FDR's death in office during WW II, says pollster **Richard Wirthlin**. . . . **Michael Dukakis** lasted only 38 days in **Madame Tussaud's** Waxworks, the shortest run in that museum's history, comments *Human Events*. . . . *Washington Post*'s chief Reagan-watcher, **Lou Cannon**, notes in a valedictory column that Reagan "never met a one-liner he didn't like," and offers as a prime example Reagan's comment when he was asked if he wanted to go out in space while on a visit to Cape Canaveral. Replied the President: "I've been there for several years." . . . What makes conservatives distinctly uneasy about **Bush** regime is comment by former Reagan campaign aide **John Sears**: "It's a strange phenomenon that the Bush Administration may wind up being more popular with the Democratic majority on the Hill and less so with Republicans." . . . *Christian Science Monitor* makes interesting point about **John Sununu**, the former New Hampshire governor who will be Bush's Chief of Staff. "One area of special interest to Sununu is a further devolution of power to the states, a cause he fervently espoused when he was chairman of the National Governors Association." . . . Good news in the new Senate. Moderate Democrat **Chuck Robb**—a Contra supporter—has been assigned to Foreign Relations Committee, as has hard-line New Hampshire Sen. **Gordon Humphrey**. . . . And Sen. **Phil Gramm** (R., Tex.), a fiscal conservative, will replace **Lowell Weicker** on Appropriations. . . . Nineteen candidates ran for Presidency. **Ron Paul** of Libertarians came in third, with 431,000 votes (0.47 per cent), running twice as well as **Lenora Fulani** of the New Alliance Party, who was fourth with 218,000 votes. **John Martin**, of Third World Assembly, ran last: he got 236 votes. . . . If you wonder why Republican Administrations have trouble turning things around once they get to Washington, hear this: The Dukakis-**Bentsen** ticket got 83 per cent of the vote in the District of Columbia. . . . *Media Watch*'s "Notables & Quotables" nominates *Time* national political correspondent **Laurence Barrett** as worst prophet of the year for summation of Republican convention: "The Vice President cannot hope to defeat Michael Dukakis . . . Bush appears, on present form at least, outmatched as a candidate, offering the voters little more than a résumé without a rationale." And **Roy Scheider** on WTBS series on USSR, as the worst historian for his comment, "Atheist though the state may be, freedom to worship as you believe is enshrined in the Soviet constitution." (Enshrined, or entombed?) . . . Best comment on who should have been *Time*'s Man of the Year for 1988 came from former **Jack Kemp** aide, novelist **John Buckley**: "The person who has had the most impact on world affairs was **Willie Horton**."

Good year-end news from Freedom House: It finds that a higher percentage of people lived in freedom in 1988—1,992.8 million, 38.86 per cent of the world's population—than at anytime since it began its freedom roster 17 years ago. It noted major advances in South Korea (free elections), Pakistan (free elections), Chile (a plebiscite), Taiwan (where a more democratic regime permitted a strike in 1988, the first since the Nationalists took over in 1949), and Mexico (where opposition parties in presidential election got nearly 50 per cent of the vote). . . . Freedom House lists only four countries in Western Hemisphere as "Not Free": Cuba, Paraguay, Panama, and Haiti. . . . Among "Partly Free States," it lists two Soviet satellites, Hungary and Poland, but Yugoslavia it calls "Not Free." . . .

Last week a Cuban official announced that **Fidel Castro**'s remaining 225 political prisoners (by Castro's count) will be released shortly, including 44 hard-core dissidents that Castro had told **John** Cardinal **O'Connor** of New York were too dangerous to release. Question: Will that amnesty include **Tania Dias Castro**, president of the tiny Cuban Party for Human Rights, who, while trying to visit a prisoner in a Havana jail last November, was roughed up by bystanders, arrested, hustled to court, and given a year's sentence—all in the space of three hours? Incidentally, human-rights activist **Ricardo Bofill**, who recently arrived in Miami, claims there are ten thousand political prisoners in Cuba.

Note for aspiring journalists: Deadline for registration for 12-week National Journalism Center winter session is January 20. Course includes six weeks of instruction in editorial skills, six weeks of on-the-job training. Students get a stipend of $100 a week. Contact: **M. Stanton Evans**, **Chris Warden**, or **Mal Kline**, 800 Maryland Ave., N.E., Washington, D.C. 20002.

Glasnost über Alles: Now it can be told. **Aleksei Stakhanov**, the heroic Soviet coal miner lauded by **Stalin** for having mined 105 tons of coal in six hours, was a fraud. *L'Express* reveals that Stakhanov was assisted in performing that feat by two other miners.

Wicks, *The Newhall [Calif.] Signal* / Rothco

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AMERICA

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THE WEEK

☐ All bets are off, now that *Time* has chosen not a Man of the Year but a Planet of the Year. And from *Time*'s perspective, it *would* have to be Earth, wouldn't it? Up on Mars, they're probably curling their little green lips over the obvious Geoism of it all. And next year—what? Ocean of the Year? Crustacean of the Year? LBO of the Year? Or just Entity of the Year?

☐ The Chicago Democratic mayoral primary was simplified when Alderman Timothy Evans took himself out of contention in order to give acting Mayor Eugene Sawyer a clear shot at State Attorney Richard Daley. Evans's stated reason was "to prevent a return to Daley machine politics." The real reason, as everyone knows, was racial: Daley is white, Evans and Sawyer are both black. That's why the gambit made slight waves (middle pages of major non-Chicago papers). Imagine the fuss, though, if white challengers to New York Mayor Ed Koch stepped aside in order to help him fend off blacks. It would be one more flaming example of racial polarization in the Big Apple. We're glad the Second City, by contrast, is run on solid civic principles.

☐ You may have been wondering what is happening to the probe of Speaker Jim Wright by the House Ethics Committee. Nothing is happening. The independent counsel, a Chicago attorney named Richard Phelan, has yet to get within forty years of the main conflict-of-interest and bogus-royalty allegations. Phelan has been busying himself with the mysterious death of one of Wright's Texas political opponents—forty years ago. The long-ago murder is probably unsolvable. Meanwhile, the current allegations are giving off the odor of rotting mackerel. Sam Dash, who headed the Watergate investigation, smells a coverup.

☐ Year-end applause for the Labor Department's decision to scrap a 45-year-old ban on many types of work in the home, mostly the manufacture of clothing and jewelry, but nowadays likely to include information-processing projects as well. The original ban was a sop to the labor unions, which find it easier to organize people if they report to work at the shop. The ruling is also pro-family, in that mothers who work at home will be able to do without day-care enterprises. An estimated 15 million people will choose this welcome option.

☐ How should public broadcasting be financed? The Working Group for Public Broadcasting has come up with an idea—a self-perpetuating, self-monitoring foundation, financed by a 2 per cent tax on TV sets and VCRs. That way, the people who pay for it—the American public—would have absolutely no control over its direction or its quality. Not that they have very much now: under the present system, Congress votes a sum every two years to the Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB), which then passes the money on to NPR, PBS, and local stations. (CPB's attitude toward their programming decisions is supposed to be one of holy awe—an attitude it carefully maintains.) Public broadcasting began, in the Great Society years, as Washington's answer to the great desert of network TV—an indictment that was exaggerated in aesthetic terms, as any *Honeymooners* rerun demonstrates, and that has become factually irrelevant as well (you want sports? preaching? porn? art? Just hit your cable button). If Washington remains in the broadcasting business, there is no reason for it to cede its power to a public-broadcasting college of cardinals. If the Eisensteins of the Nineties want handouts, they'll just have to get used to the notion of strings attached.

☐ Jesse Jackson has a new idea. Blacks should henceforth be called African-Americans. Okay. Our colleague Jeffrey Hart sees him and raises him, declaring himself henceforth an English-Irish-German-French-American. Entrepreneurs with a good supply of hyphens in stock are in for boom times.

☐ Barney Frank is very definitely one of Them: a gay liberal Democratic congressman from Where Else? And yet, well, somehow this prime specimen has not *quite* severed all relations with reality, herein defined as the other 49 states. He recently told the *New York Times* he's thinking of writing a book of advice for liberals, urging them to abandon several precious "not-sa-pos-tas" (as in "you're not-sa-pos-ta say that"). He said: "There are three not-sa-pos-tas that have hurt liberals. You're not supposed to say that the free-enterprise system is wonderful and has worked better

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LETTER FROM WASHINGTON

HALF A HUZZAH, if you please, for the kinder and gentler Congress. And, while we we're at it, the kinder and gentler Presidency.

It's not clear whether the rest of the nation will follow the example of its elected officials in Washington. But, just for now, the most extraordinary cooing sounds are to be heard along the Pennsylvania Avenue axis linking Capitol Hill to the White House.

Behind the scenes, Bush aides are quietly reassuring both Republican and Democratic leaders that they want to work with Congress—unlike (wink, nudge) a certain Administration that has been running things in Washington for the past eight years or so. Bush has invited individual Democrats and Republicans up to the Vice President's mansion at the Naval Observatory for private lunches and tête-à-têtes, going far, in the process, toward smoothing Democratic feathers ruffled by the vitriol of the presidential campaign. His aides have consulted with members of the relevant Senate committees prior to naming Cabinet and sub-Cabinet appointments.

Bush won additional points from Democrats on January 4, when he good-naturedly spent several hours on Capitol Hill in his role as Vice President administering the oath of office to 33 newly elected or re-elected senators. What really struck the senators was the way Bush later posed for pictures with them and their families as the swearings-in were re-enacted. That gesture provoked an observation from the likes of Ohio's Howard Metzenbaum that Bush "is a good sport."

An early test of this spirit of fraternity will come as Bush begins to nominate individuals to fill some 35 currently vacant posts in the federal judiciary. One aide to the Senate Democratic leadership says Bush officials have already indicated to key senators that the incoming President will not nominate the sorts of judicial "ideologues" who raised congressional hackles during the Reagan years.

"Clearly, this isn't the candidate of Willie Horton," says the aide with relief. "The irony is that Bush went out on the trail saying ideology mattered. Now that he's about to be President, he's telling us to forget about ideology. He's actually acting quite competently."

Democrats, too, are pledging their cooperation with the new President, although one might be forgiven for thinking that they're doing so with all the conviction of a New Year's reveler promising to stop drinking so much. The Senate's new Majority Leader, George Mitchell of Maine, has gotten things off to an accommodating start by arranging for Senate committees to begin confirmation hearings on Republican Cabinet appointees even before inauguration day. "[Bush] has reached out in a very accommodating way," says Mitchell, "and we want to reciprocate."

As if to underscore the fragility of such pronouncements, even Menace of the House Jim Wright has joined in the spirit of kindness and fair play. After being elected to a second term as Speaker, Menace Wright announced to his colleagues that he would work with Bush to "fulfill his promise of a 'kinder, gentler' America." But then the Menace got carried away with himself: he promised "greater cooperation and consultation" with House Republicans.

Where cooperation and fair play are concerned, of course, Wright is Public Enemy Number One. The hollowness of his oratorical extravagance underscores a central fact about the Democrats and their promises to cooperate with the White House: they don't really mean what they say.

It's not that they're liars, it's just that they're hungry. They are hungry to set the agenda after eight long years in the political wilderness, hungry to make George Bush eat his words on taxes. They are also hungry to prove that the electorate rejected the Democratic messenger (Dukakis), not the message.

The Democratic ranks of the 101st Congress are infused with a new type of young, aggressive lawmaker. More than 60 per cent of the House and more than half of the Senate are now made up of members who were elected in the 1980s. Many of these lawmakers, their political views forged by the experiences of Vietnam and Watergate, are now attaining positions of considerable seniority and influence on Capitol Hill. Consider that the new Senate Majority Leader himself was first elected in 1982.

Stack that against the team Bush is putting together, top-heavy as it is with holdovers from the Ford Administration. The Ford/Bush team, experienced in the ways of Washington and lacking in the ideological zeal that energized the Reagan Presidency, may try to do what it knows best: placate Congress. The Young Turks on Capitol Hill will naturally fall into the habits they have developed during the confrontational Reagan years: fight tooth-and-nail for their agenda.

What with a perennial budget deficit, a Savings & Loan crisis, and a host of other contentious issues on the horizon, there'll be plenty to fight about, as there was during the Reagan Presidency. The worry is that the Young Turks on the Hill will fight as tenaciously as ever, while the Old Guard in the Bush Administration won't realize the extent to which the rules of the game have changed.

And the honeymoon, if there is one, may belong to Congress. —CATO

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than any other. You're not supposed to say that in our era, certainly since the fall of Hitler, Communism has been by far the worst system of government in the world, or that most people who are in prison are bad people." All these taboos do, he says, is "make it plausible for Ronald Reagan to say that we're not for free enterprise, that we're not anti-Communist, and that we're not anti-criminal." Ergo, liberals should cut their losses and retool their rhetoric. Very interesting. Frank goes so far as to say that liberals *act* as if Communism and crime were bad, but don't *say* it enough, that's all. If he really thinks that, he may be out of touch with Massachusetts.

☐ Thanks to his reforms, Mikhail Gorbachev told the United Nations, people in his country are "no longer kept in prison for their religious and political beliefs." The next day, *New York Times* columnist A. M.

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Rosenthal received permission to visit an island in the Soviet Gulag Archipelago—a privilege never before granted to a Western journalist. His hosts told him the only prisoners now left in Perm Labor Camp 35 had been convicted of crimes on the order of espionage and treason. Everyone jailed for "anti-Soviet agitation," the usual charge when the Kremlin decides to send a political or religious irritant to Gulag, had already been released. But even the dozen Soviet officials who stuck with Rosenthal everywhere he went couldn't keep every inmate at bay; several got through to the seasoned Soviet-watcher, who a generation ago had been kicked out of Poland for defying Soviet practices. "Gorbachev says there are no political prisoners any more," one of them shouted derisively; Rosenthal later learned he had been jailed for trying to escape to Finland. Even the four carefully coached prisoners the camp commandant presented for a well-supervised chat nevertheless took the opportunity to declare their innocence. Still, for Gorbachev this is progress toward *glasnost*. Three years ago he was claiming there was no such thing as a Soviet labor camp.

☐ Pol Pot is alive, and he's not hiding in Argentina. He's still lurking in the forests of Cambodia, with his forty thousand-man Khmer Rouge army, supplied by our good friends the Red Chinese. If Vietnam keeps pulling out its troops, who have occupied Cambodia for nearly ten years, Pol Pot could return to power. Under the regime installed by Vietnam, Cambodia has enjoyed what, in the Communist world, amounts to good government: no genocide to speak of, and a thriving black market. (If only Vietnam itself could say the same!) The Khmer Rouge still controls much of the countryside by terror, and a Vietnamese withdrawal would probably mean a civil war. Few Cambodians would want a Khmer Rouge victory, but few wanted it the first time—and they got it anyway.

☐ For years, conservative Princeton alumni have tried (unsuccessfully) to fight the pervasive liberalism infecting their alma mater. Enter *The Princeton Sentinel*. This punchy undergraduate newspaper, just starting its second year, has liberals foaming. Defend the free market? Awful. Promote ROTC? Horrors. For more outrages, write to *The Princeton Sentinel*, P.O. Box 1147, Princeton, N.J. 08542.

☐ What's this? *Ms.* and *Mother Jones* are going . . . *mainstream*? Looks that way. *Ms.* is trying to shed its dungaree-dyke image with a new stress on lipstick and romance, Meryl Streep replacing Bella Abzug as a cover girl. *Mother Jones*'s cover features Susan Sarandon, more chic than radical, its articles shifting from coalminers' strikes to personal finance. The marketing wizards seem to have discovered that pitching a magazine at Pete Seeger is no longer the ideal way to lure readers and advertisers. Naturally, the editors of both mags deny they're selling out the Cause and insist they haven't been touched by the Reagan *Zeitgeist*. Gorbachev will try to tell you the same thing.

☐ IT'S FINE TO BE A VEGETARIAN BUT SHUT UP ABOUT IT AND STOP SLAUGHTERING OUR BROCCOLI DEPT. Casey Kasem, the Top-40 disk jockey, offered these "words of thanks" to *Vegetarian Times*: "Let Nature's animals, our gentle companions, walk this earth yet another day, free to live their lives as the Creator intended."

☐ Senator Claiborne Pell has had talks with Fidel Castro in an effort to "improve relations." It is not clear how much the senator's relations with Cuba can be improved.

☐ British college students, furious about government plans to replace college grants with loans, term the change a "tax on intelligence." A vigorous exposition of this view has produced 22 injuries and 45 arrests, which doesn't exactly prove their point.

☐ People tax our intelligence all the time. That's why we write "The Week."

A Reagan Doctrine?

WITH THE GALLOPING dissolution of the Contra effort in Nicaragua, the whole Central American package as envisioned by Ronald Reagan and as supported by the commission he invited Henry Kissinger to head seems to be on the way out. With it goes what we happily referred to as the "Reagan Doctrine." We tend to coin these doctrines rather too quickly, it being journalistically easy to do. Thus the "Nixon Doctrine" called, after the historic meeting at Guam, for a new formula: the United States would supply arms; the countries at bay, the fighting men. The Brezhnev Doctrine specified that no nation once Sovietized would ever be permitted to leave the mother camp. The Nixon Doctrine foundered in Vietnam, the Brezhnev Doctrine is in the process of foundering in Afghanistan, and the Reagan Doctrine is as dead as the Contra movement.

A pity, because the Nixon-Reagan formula is essentially the correct one. The United States has a strategic interest in protecting those who wish to protect themselves against annexation by the Soviet empire. In Afghanistan, the Reagan Doctrine worked—because there was bipartisan support for backing the freedom fighters and because the vulnerability of the Soviet aggressor force to the Stinger missile proved the critical military datum.

In Central America, Mr. Reagan was not able to

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muster a standing majority in Congress, and public opinion was slow, fitful, and ambiguous. There were too many Nobel and other prizes floating about for anyone who called for a "diplomatic" solution, which is defined as letting the Sandinistas do pretty well whatever they wish to do, short only, one supposes, of direct, overland aggression against El Salvador, Honduras, or Costa Rica.

George Bush has a background in intelligence work and knows, or should know, that there are certain kinds of operations that work or do not work depending on the secrecy that shrouds their execution. It is almost certainly too late to mount a successful black operation designed to bring down the government of Daniel Ortega, and legislative and constitutional scruples need to be faced and a fresh doctrine minted. Its dimensions should be strategically different from those Mr. Reagan adopted. The enemy, in Nicaragua, isn't so much the Sandinistas as it is—Castro's Cuba. In his inaugural address, President John F. Kennedy said that the Western Hemisphere would continue to be "master of its own house." Three months later, he gave in to Castro at the Bay of Pigs. We have yet to have a President who is thoughtfully pledged to the restoration of the Monroe Doctrine, the maintenance of which John Kennedy was implicitly pledged to.

It may just be that Castro is ripe for plucking. Fourteen million dollars of Soviet hard currency every day, which is the cost to Gorbachev of maintaining his satellite, comes to a whole lot of vodka and caviar shipped out, by a nation hungry for dollars. If Bush wants seriously to get the West's act together, he should begin by applying pressure on the Soviet Union to put pressure on Cuba. . . . Central Americans would be only the most immediate and obvious beneficiaries.

Vote, You Guys

THE PROPOSED CLOSING of 91 military bases, recommended by the Pentagon commission, is probably a worthy reform. Too many "defense" projects are really local pork-barrel items, like federally funded dams and highways. True, the estimated savings of $693 million per year falls short of what Everett Dirksen defined as real money. But it's a good idea in principle.

What's a little less encouraging about this proposal is that it's one more instance of Congress delegating its hard decisions to others. Constitutionally or not, the Gramm-Rudman Act turned Congress's spending authority over to the executive branch. And now, bashful about voting itself a pay raise directly, it has created yet another commission, to schedule raises for *all* federal officials (including congressmen, just by the way) subject to the President's approval. Congress won't have to vote on this one.

Again, the substance of the measure is highly defensible. Public officials *should* be paid salaries competitive with what they could earn in the private sector. But appropriating money is a congressional prerogative, and therefore a congressional duty. By ducking the responsibility, Congress is following a baleful pattern.

Except in the field of foreign policy, where it has tried to muscle in on presidential authority, Congress has shown a decided preference for passing the buck. Many of its powers are routinely delegated to the administrative law of the bureaucracies, which, being less accountable, are less reluctant to exercise them. And Congress has allowed the federal courts to usurp the legislative power on such red-hot social issues as school prayer and abortion, on the flimsy pretext that the courts are merely "interpreting" the Constitution, not rewriting it; by this means the liberal agenda gets enacted without the need for legislative vote or political accountability.

It's one thing to get the government off our backs. It's another thing for our elected representatives to get self-government off their own backs. The buck may stop in the Oval Office, but it should at least pass through the two Houses of Congress.

Playing Hardball

MORAL INDIGNATION at the murder of the 259 people aboard Pan Am flight 103 and of 11 inhabitants of Lockerbie by terrorists as yet unknown is justified but misplaced. It will strike the terrorists as impotent ranting, a substitute for action. A determination to respond would be the best reply. But what response is available?

Additional security precautions? These are well worth exploring, but quite inadequate in comparison to the problem. They may make life more difficult for the terrorist bomber, but no advance precaution, however stringent, can guarantee the safety of the traveling public.

Legal sanctions, such as extraditing and trying terrorists? This is a liberal absurdity, like bringing charges of assault against individual soldiers in an invading army. Terrorist states, where the criminals seek refuge, would never cooperate in bringing them to justice. And the legal process would never touch the infrastructure of terrorism: the camps where terrorists are trained, the cooperative network of terrorist organizations, and the terrorist states that provide passports, training, weapons, and a safe haven. Yet those who manage and protect terrorism are as guilty as those who plant the bombs.

Economic and diplomatic sanctions, then? Certainly the West should impose stringent sanctions on Czechoslovakia, which supplies the undetectable plastic explosive Semtex to terrorist groups via proxies like →

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BLACKS AND JEWS

FORMER PRESIDENT Jimmy Carter made a surprise appearance at the close of a recent conference on black-Jewish relations held at the Carter Presidential Center in Atlanta. True to form, Carter delivered himself of one central truth—and drew from it an entirely false conclusion.

"One of the most remarkable developments" since blacks and Jews cooperated to spawn the American civil-rights movement in the 1950s and '60s, the former President astutely observed, is today's "cooperation between black leaders in this nation and the leaders of the Third World." Then the conclusion: "The things which bind us together are so much greater than the things which separate us."

It is certainly a fact that America's liberal black leadership has now cast its lot with those who call themselves the Third World. But the ties that bind that alliance together prevent others from joining it.

The sponsors of "The Black-Jewish Alliance: Reunion and Renewal"—the Marjorie Kovler Institute for Black-Jewish Relations, the Martin Luther King Jr. Center for Nonviolent Social Change, and the Carter Presidential Center—may have hoped that a reunion of the blacks and Jews who together helped to desegregate America would restore the now-troubled relations between these two blocs. But that Third World that President Carter talked about includes the Palestine Liberation Organization and its supporters, and —notwithstanding recent movement by the PLO itself —it has been strikingly hostile to Israel.

Black and Jewish leaders may once have agreed about civil rights, and non-activist blacks and Jews may remain compatible on many issues; but liberal black and Jewish leaders now undeniably disagree on issues of primary importance to each group. That disagreement began when blacks denounced Israel after the Six-Day War. It widened with Black Power and the ousting of whites from key civil-rights institutions. It was further poisoned by affirmative action, which indirectly injured Jews and awakened memories of anti-Jewish quotas. It has perhaps been finally destroyed by Jesse Jackson's alliance with frankly anti-Semitic groups.

What emerged in Atlanta, moreover, was that interest in repairing the alliance is one-sided. For Jews of the Reform tradition, as most of the civil-rights activists are, an alliance with the downtrodden is an essential part of feeling Jewish. But for blacks, Jews are white—a point tactfully and truthfully offered by Benjamin Hooks of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People. In a nation which was forcefully segregated as recently as 25 years ago, blacks may need sympathetic whites, but they cannot be expected to be glad they need them.

The question is: When will the Jews jump parties? Notwithstanding the difficulty that such a change would pose for the Atlanta activists, rank-and-file Jewish voters are already signaling some such movement. What restrains Jewish voters from making the last leap to the GOP is in part the enormous step they would be taking in finally breaking with the liberal tradition of Reform Judaism. But in part, too, it is a habit of seeing the conservative social agenda, which is in part a Christian agenda, as a threat. (Author Jonathan Kaufman, calmly linking Christianity and Nazis, summarized this as "the whole fundamentalist Christian, Jerry Falwell, Nazis-on-Bush's-staff thing.")

At one time, perhaps, fear of Christian anti-Semitism had some basis. But when pressed to explain that fear now, Jews are unable to go beyond social incompatibility and the possibility that a Jewish child might be made uncomfortable by a school prayer. Compared to the recent outbreak of a truly virulent anti-Semitism on the Left, school prayer is a trifle.

AT THE CLOSE of the Atlanta conference, moderators asked participants briefly to suggest things blacks and Jews might do to improve their relations. Encourage membership in each other's organizations, said one participant. Recommend books each side should read, said another. Assist in voter registration, said a third.

William Strickland, former New England coordinator for the Jackson campaign, then raised his hand, and named the three pro-Jackson members of the Democratic National Committee who have backed the PLO. "If Bob Farrell, Ruth Anne Scaff, and Willie Barrow are removed from the Democratic National Committee simply because they are pro-PLO, I don't think the party will survive it."

There was an uncomfortable silence. Then everyone went right on talking about preparing curricula for mutual understanding. But they already understand each other perfectly. □

Miss Flick was press secretary in the Alan Keyes campaign for the U.S. Senate in Maryland.

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→ Libya. But will it? And if so, for how long? The U.S. abandoned its mild sanctions against Syria (for its attempted planting of a bomb on another plane in London) after 18 months. Most other states did nothing in the first place. There is, quite simply, no stomach for *sustained* penalties, especially if they are irksome to the countries imposing them.

That leaves military reprisals against the terrorist training camps and the states that harbor them. Mrs. Thatcher seemed to oppose this as representing the primitive justice of "an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth." But primitive justice is better than no justice at all, which is what the above remedies offer. And a military reprisal would serve wider purposes than justice, notably obstructing and deterring future terrorism by destroying the terrorist infrastructure and killing terrorists. The example of the Libyan bombing suggests that such reprisals have a salutary effect.

We should therefore launch a bombing raid on whichever terrorist camp provides the easiest and most useful target. It does not matter if another group was guilty of the Pan Am bomb. All such groups are different divisions in the same terrorist army. Libya, which continues to harbor them and which is known to have supplied Semtex, offers a further target: Colonel Qaddafi's "pharmaceutical" plant, which intelligence sources believe to be intended for chemical warfare. Shooting down the two Libyan MiGs was justified on the simple grounds of self-defense. Destroying Qaddafi's capability to wage chemical warfare would be self-defense for civilization as a whole. Terrorists last month destroyed a large plane. We must not allow them next time to destroy a large city.

Ready to Go

CONSERVATIVES WHO hoped George Bush would appoint an eat-'em-up-alive Cabinet should remember that not even Ronald Reagan did that when he and his fellow Californians came to town in 1980. What Bush has put together is a workmanlike machine manned by officials who, unlike too many of the Reaganites and the Carterites before them, know how to operate in the higher echelons of industry and government. He has opted for balance, and (read his lips, Governor Dukakis) competence.

The Right can be pleased with his choice of John Sununu as Chief of Staff, a key slot in any Administration; of John Tower at Defense, and of Jack Kemp at HUD. George Bush is eager to broaden his constituency, and with Kemp at HUD and a black official (Dr. Louis Sullivan) at HHS, he has signaled his interest in bringing innovative ideas to the problems that especially afflict the black and Hispanic communities: welfare dependency, poverty, drug abuse. To the Republican establishment he has given James Baker at State, Nicholas Brady at Treasury, and Richard Thornburgh as Attorney General, the latter two, holdovers from the last Reagan Cabinet, as is Lauro Cavazos at Education. Rather than enter into immediate and open warfare with the environmentalists—as Reagan did by appointing James Watt—Bush has reached into their own ranks for his Environmental Protection Administrator, William Reilly of the World Wildlife Fund, but he has balanced that choice by putting in at Interior former Congressman Manuel Lujan of New Mexico, a man in the hardheaded mold of his predecessor, Don Hodel.

To shore up his congressional flank he has named Elizabeth Dole as his Secretary of Labor, an appointment greeted with "cautious optimism" by the AFL-CIO's Lane Kirkland, a fellow Carolinian. It was armed warfare between Kirkland and the Reagan Administration from day one. Carla Hills as chief trade negotiator was not a popular choice with conservatives; she comes out of the all-but-defunct Rockefeller wing of the party; Brent Scowcroft as the NSA raised some alarm, given his views on SDI; and there is considerable concern that Lauro Cavazos will undo William Bennett's good work at Education. They should be watched. We volunteer.

The Cold War Is Over

Peter pummeled Sweden;
  Catherine bashed the Turks.
Czars both big and little loved
  To give the Poles the works.
These unsocial actions,
  I would merely note,
Happened years before the West
  Got Communism's goat.

W. H. VON DREELE

Dartmouth's Wild Indians Stopped by the Court

THE RULING BY Judge Bruce Mohl in the Dartmouth College case is a stunning blow to the pretensions of Dartmouth justice. Judge Mohl was ever so careful not to speak broadly about the case of the Dartmouth administration *v.* two students involved in conservative student journalism. He elected to rule on a narrow point, and gave a gentlemanly dismissal to the broader charges against Dartmouth's disciplinary committee. But the fact remains that the whole Dartmouth establishment has been discredited. It boils down to this: Dartmouth College ordered two students, Christopher Baldwin and John Sutter, to stay away from the premises of the college until September 1989, and

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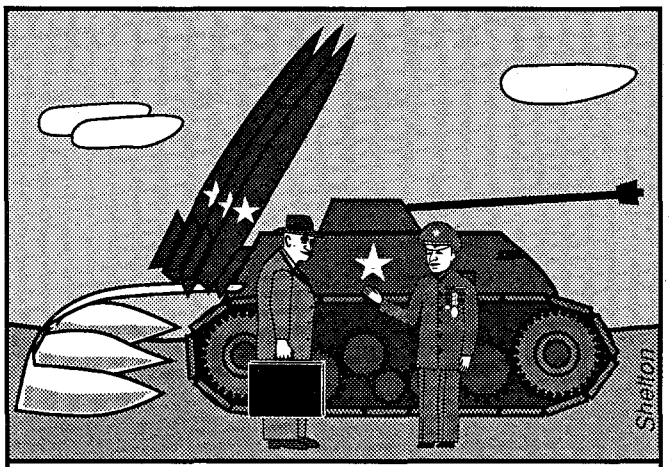

"Tell Comrade Gorbachev that we are right on schedule in converting old tanks into tractors for peaceful plowing."

the court has now issued an injunction requiring Dartmouth to reinstate the two students effective immediately. That is the nut of what has happened. Details:

The conflict arose when the *Dartmouth Review*, the dissident, conservative student paper, published a transcript of the classroom meanderings of a wild black music professor, raising the question whether he was qualified to teach American Music, when what he spoke primarily about was white racism, exploring the frontiers of abusive and profane language. After the publication of the transcript, four students connected with the *Review* approached the professor after his class, intending to advise him that he was free to answer the article published about him. This encounter resulted in the exchange of vivid language, primarily that of the professor, who instantly fled to the authorities demanding that the students be prosecuted, which they were by Dartmouth's Committee on Standards (COS): after a hearing, the COS found the students guilty of harassment, disorderly conduct, and invasion of privacy. The students then brought suit against the university for violation of contractual rights and discriminatory treatment.

Judge Mohl restricted himself to documenting that one of the jurors on the disciplinary committee, Professor Albert Lavalley, was clearly disqualified from rendering a disinterested vote given that four months before the affair he had written a private letter categorically denouncing the *Dartmouth Review* and all its works. And, having found for the plaintiffs, Judge Mohl tossed a posy at the bloodied administration by saying that he found "no persuasive evidence that Dartmouth College has retaliated against or otherwise pursued disciplinary action against the plaintiffs on account of their association with the *Dartmouth Review*." Ho ho.

—Twenty-nine students occupied the president's office in 1986, to protest investments in South Africa. The penalty? Nothing. The reason given by the Dartmouth administration? That their "actions were motivated by strongly held convictions."

—A student (it transpired during the hearing) found guilty of rape was suspended for one term.

—It transpired that the dean's office had surreptitiously egged on a public demonstration against "racism" just before the disciplinary committee met.

—A memo from the dean who serves as chairman of the COS, intended to be read and then destroyed, suggested that the disciplinary hearings were not confined to the incident in question involving the kooky black professor.

—It transpired that evidence of gross bias by more than one member of the disciplinary committee had been concealed by the administration.

—And it transpired that the moment the COS ruled that the defendants were guilty, the dean rushed out to give the good news to—AP? UPI? The *New York Times*? No: to the Afro-American Society, the Black Caucus, the Native American Society, the Women's Issues League, and the Dartmouth Area Gay and Lesbian Organization. The longtime targets of, and adversaries of—the *Dartmouth Review*.

Theoretically, the college could send the case back to the Committee on Standards, minus Professor Lavalley, and try the whole thing again. But this time, it would need to make a case in the teeth of all the information that came out during the heavy depositions that preceded the hearing before Judge Mohl. That is Dartmouth's alternative.

The students' alternative, it would appear to this layman, in the absence of counsel, is to file a damage suit against Dartmouth. The injunction hearing was won under the brilliant leadership of a major New York trial lawyer, Harvey Myerson of Myerson & Kuhn, and New York lawyers do not lightly give two or three hundred hours of their time. The careers of the two students have been set back by one year, and they will not graduate with their class. How much is that worth, in a society that sets dollar figures to calibrate the value of everything from a bloody nose to palimony?

What yells out at the U.S. public, alerted to the Dartmouth case by columnists, editorial writers, feature writers, *60 Minutes*, and the *Today* show, is the incandescent hypocrisy of so many people who, in the name of free speech, persecute its practitioners—if their opinions are conservative. —WFB

RICO Run Amok

THE WORLD MAY never know if Drexel Burnham, the Wall Street securities firm that pioneered the modern junk-food market and by that means helped to restore power to corporate stockholders, was guilty of the charges to which it is currently negotiating a guilty plea. In truth, Drexel Burnham had little choice, whether innocent or guilty.

By taking action against the company under the

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RICO law, intended for use against organized crime, federal prosecutors were able to impose on the company financial sanctions that threatened to ruin it *before the trial.* Once Drexel was able to limit the financial costs of conviction by advance agreement, the calculation was plain and imperative. The costs of pleading guilty: $650 million in fines and restitution. The costs of insisting on a fair trial: bankruptcy and ruin. When criminals make such threats to companies, we call it "the protection racket." When federal prosecutors and the SEC do so, we give them favorable newspaper headlines.

In other words, RICO has abolished the presumption of innocence. That is a legal innovation that is hard to justify even if it leads to the jailing of murderers. It is doubly difficult to support when its victims are stockbrokers whose clients, supposedly the victims of their activities, make no complaint. The most lasting legacy of Mr. Rudolph Giuliani, the U.S. Attorney for Southern New York, who has led the battle against Drexel, may well be to have destroyed the credibility of a guilty plea. These are not the best credentials for Mr. Giuliani's rumored run for the mayoralty of New York.

Israel, the PLO, And the U.S. (Us)

YASIR ARAFAT said the magic words in Geneva, and the State Department will be talking to the PLO in Tunis. The prolonged tango between the two provokes dismay or elation, depending on the onlooker. Wrongly, in each case.

The error, common among friends of Israel, of seeing recent events as the overture to *Götterdämmerung* assumes, as Israel's former Foreign Minister Abba Eban has noted, "that Israel is a demilitarized land like Iceland or Monaco, Liechtenstein or Costa Rica." Eban gently reminded the nervous of reality, "The 'Middle East Military Balance' published by the Israeli Center of Strategic Studies at Tel Aviv University shows Israel with a mobilizable manpower of 540,000, some 3,800 tanks, 682 aircraft with awesome bomb capacity, thousands of artillery pieces and missiles, and an imposing electronic capacity. The PLO has, according to the same survey, eight thousand men in scattered places, zero tanks and aircraft, a few guns and no missiles, but a variety of hand grenades, mortars, stones, and bottles." Eban omitted the heaviest weight on Israel's side of the balance—the inconceivability of the United States' ever letting it go under.

We also aren't going to get peace in our time. Yasir Arafat does not control all irredentist terrorists; he does not even control all of them in the PLO. The Arab world remains a cat's cradle of parties and factions, some of them with considerable power to do mischief. Israel's domestic political travails, meanwhile, suggest the Unitarian thought that there is at most one democracy in the Middle East. The material for serenity is about as strong as Soviet concrete.

America's interests lie neither in defending the Israeli *laager*, nor in striving for the brotherhood of man. They lie in extracting an ally and a friend from an occupation that is a looming demographic threat, and an immediate social headache; in being on good terms with as many nations in the region as possible; and in showing that we, not the Soviets, are the superpower that can get things done. The PLO is a player in the West Bank game. Sometimes it is appropriate to condemn other players, sometimes to talk to them. Since Arafat satisfied our conditions for talking, we are right to give that a try.

Patching Up the S&Ls

They can't be, like a lame horse, shot,
Because each cemetery lot
As well as mortuary fees
Would trigger a financial squeeze;
So, splinted up and bandaged, they
Chew placidly on extra hay
Forked over from the Treasury,
Whose knees knock over '33.

W. H. VON DREELE

Mayor Barry's Legacy

TWO D.C. UNDERCOVER cops were stationed at a Ramada Inn late last month, where they were about to make a drug deal with one of the guests, a former city employee named Charles Lewis. But who should drop in for a social call on Mr. Lewis but Mayor Marion Barry?—whereupon the detectives were recalled from their assignment. After Lewis checked out, police found traces of cocaine in the room where he'd just spent four weeks. The mayor had visited him several times, and a Barry aide had picked up the tab for his stay. Upon leaving, Lewis vanished.

When the story hit the front page of the *Washington Post*, Barry had a lot of explaining to do. He didn't do it. He admitted only "maybe lack of some judgments" in his associations and accused the *Post* of waging a vendetta against him, perhaps because it has persisted in reporting on his associations. He implied that the liberal paper was somehow driven by racist motives, a charge only his most diehard followers were buying.

Barry has been the subject of several scandals and many rumors. In his ten years as mayor, 11 city officials have been convicted on corruption charges,

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and his former mistress served time twice, once for drug dealing and once for refusing to testify whether she'd supplied Barry himself with drugs. His turn may be coming: the Justice Department is investigating his latest indiscretion.

It's a pattern at least as old as Jimmy Walker: a flamboyant big-city mayor with an ethnic base of popularity plays fast and loose with the law, then tries to keep his head out of the noose by appealing to his followers' shared sense of victimhood. This time the act isn't flying. Even (or especially) the capital's black journalists are openly saying he's an embarrassment, and whites, in this post-*Bonfire* world, aren't being bluffed or scared off from criticizing him. Barry has made D.C.'s city government a bad joke, brought discredit on home rule, and jeopardized whatever chance the District had of attaining statehood.

FSLIC Fizzles

WITH SOME IRONY, Savings & Loan associations are known as "thrifts." Yet there is no incentive to be thrifty with S&L deposits while a government agency stands ready to bail out deposits of up to $100,000, and probably more. Many thrifts could be charitably described as insolvent, with no prospect of becoming viable. In Texas alone, the S&Ls lost $9 billion in 1988. The Federal Savings & Loan Insurance Corporation, FSLIC (pronounced *fizzlick*) is committed to repaying depositors if insolvent thrifts fold, but FSLIC is $50 to $100 billion short. Uncle Sam is likely to get stuck with most of this tab very soon, which makes all the fuss over necessarily minor adjustments in the budget look beside the point.

What went wrong? After the rapid disinflation of 1981-82, the prices of oil, farm products, and related real-estate values collapsed. But the Texas thrifts nonetheless tripled their assets from 1982 to 1986 by offering high interest rates on certificates of deposits (CDs). Since the deposits were insured, depositors did not care that the thrifts were acquiring risky assets—everything from empty buildings to junk bonds. Even prudent thrifts can invest in the CDs of a hundred imprudent thrifts, secure in the knowledge that they can collect $100,000 in insurance on each institution that fails.

Any increase in federal spending owing to the insolvent thrifts would be temporary, because there is not an infinite number of thrifts to be closed. Such temporary outlays are legitimately financed by borrowing. Permanent tax increases are not necessary to meet temporary expenses; they would only permanently increase the size of the government, to the detriment of the private sector. Temporary tax increases are equally ill-advised because they would distort the timing of activity, causing a downturn and disappointing revenues while people waited for such surtaxes to be removed. Postponing action until 1994, when Gramm-Rudman targets disappear, would only make the problem worse.

What can be done at this late date is to reform the entire deposit-insurance system in order to limit *future* losses. Federal Reserve Governor Wayne Angell has proposed that insurance be limited to $100,000 per depositor household, not per bank, and only once in a lifetime. Once bitten, twice shy. Others go further, suggesting that deposit insurance should be private and competitive, since only private insurance companies would have the incentive and expertise to charge lower insurance premiums to prudent lenders.

In addition to limiting or eliminating nationalization of the deposit-insurance business, it is none too early to get the government out of the equally risky business of guaranteed loans. Otherwise, the next unpleasant budgetary surprise may be to find that Uncle Sam has been underwriting billions in loans to Latin America and Eastern Europe. Such hidden debts may well be larger than the visible national debt. Myopic attention to short-term budget issues will prove counterproductive if, as in the past, it leads to continued neglect of these hidden debts.

An Appreciative Audience

As mighty oaks from acorns grow,
The hormone war's about to show
A tendency to escalate
And could, by killing ocean freight,
Cause Mr. Smoot to wave a shroud
At Mr. Hawley on his cloud.

W. H. VON DREELE

thirtysomething

NEW YEAR'S DAY marked the anniversary of something that, after thirty years, has become exceedingly grey and hopeless: Fidel Castro's rule of Cuba.

In the late Seventies and early Eighties, Castro's persecution of homosexuals and writers awakened a sluggish world to his long-standing human-rights abuses. ("Abuses," in this context, is a misnomer; the system works just as it is intended to.) The new realism flowered in an open letter sent to Castro last month by 170 scientists, literati, and movie stars, urging him to hold a plebiscite on his rule as Augusto Pinochet had just done. Havana responded with a fine bit of Hitlerian political science: "The Cuban people held a grand plebiscite concerning their destiny thirty years ago, and they repeat that action every day with their decision [*sic*] to continue with socialism."

But even Castro's critics still feel obliged to repeat

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the routine tributes to his successes in medicine and education. Cuba may be a prison, but the inmates are healthy and literate.

The numbers tell a different story. The Cuba that Castro hijacked in 1959 was not a Third World slum, but one of the most advanced nations in the region. In 1957, Cuba had over six thousand physicians—more than twice as many as all the other Caribbean nations combined. Life expectancy in the early Fifties was 59 years—higher than in Spain or Greece. Infant mortality, at 32 deaths per 1,000 births (not 60 per 1,000, as Castro likes to claim) was lower than Italy's. The literacy rate, according to the 1953 census, was 76 per cent (Castro claims a pre-Communist level of 25 per cent).

Castro's Cuba has progressed, partly by doctoring its own figures. Kenneth Hill of the National Academy of Sciences found some years ago that the Cuban infant-mortality statistics were suspect, and Castro has boosted the literacy rate by ceasing to count adults over fifty—which, for various reasons, is the portion of the adult population that is apt to have the highest illiteracy rate. Cuba's real advances have been matched, or exceeded, by other Latin American nations.

Castro rules as a tyrant, and his benefits are bogus. He does not believe in plebiscites, because the day after, he would be unemployed.

NOTES & ASIDES

A Toast to Bill Rusher

(Delivered at the party for WAR on board the Empress of New York, *Dec. 9. See p. 36.)*

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN. I join with you all on this day, so unhappy in the sense that we are losing a beloved professional colleague, so happy in the sense that we have an opportunity to express our gratitude to him.

Clif White and Jack Casey and Tom Farmer have known him much longer than I have, although I dare say not so intimately. To know anyone intimately it requires that he have the authority to question your disposition to spend money. In this respect I am certain you will all be glad to know that the guest of honor is the quintessential Republican; at least, that could have been said of him before we reached the era of high-deficit Republicanism. I don't mean to say that he is tiresome about it, merely that he is thorough. And unrelenting. Even on Sundays. I remember the legend of Congressman Robert Rich of Pennsylvania, who was elected to the House of Representatives in 1930, and served there approximately twenty years. During the first 19 of those years he uttered only a single declamation—the same declamation—on a dozen or more occasions, each year. The debate on a spending measure would take place and, after it became obvious that it would be approved, Congressman Rich would raise his hand and, recognized, would say, "Where are we going to get the money, gentlemen?" And sit down. It is recorded that in his declining years, following a debate that had gone on for three weeks and had kept his colleagues at their desks night after night, the moment finally came for a vote on the controversial measure, at which point, nearing midnight, Congressman Rich raised his hand. The entire chamber groaned. But under the rules the Speaker was powerless, and, grumpily, he recognized the member from Pennsylvania, who, struggling against his great age, rose to his feet, looked around at his colleagues, and said, "April Fool!"

Bill Rusher is not that versatile. But as publisher of a journal that, unless Wick Allison performs miracles, holds out great promise of being the longest, most consistent money-loser in American publishing history, he is at once badly cast, and well cast. Badly cast in that it strikes anyone who for thirty years has viewed him coming jauntily to his office every morning not sooner than three minutes to ten, not later than two minutes to ten, that he could not be other than the president or vice president of a prosperous house of usury; well cast in that his serene and self-confident mien easily belies the probability that the first person he will encounter on entering his office is an irate creditor; the second, his secretary giving notice.

Our guest of honor is a man of most meticulous habits, and it is a miracle, of the kind that Providence less and less frequently vouchsafes us, that he should have endured for so long the disorderly habits of his colleagues. When so many years ago, in 1957, I asked him timidly whether he would consent to accept the responsibilities of publisher, he reached instinctively into his pocket and pulled out his notebook, presumably to see whether his notebook had any objections. Having passed that hurdle, NATIONAL REVIEW was subjected to a methodical probing over a period of three or four weeks. A few very close friends were directly consulted, among them our toastmaster, Clif White, and in due course the decision was reached. Our old friend Providence cooperated with us in keeping him away from the offices of NATIONAL REVIEW which, had he examined them, he would no doubt have returned without faltering to the relative tranquillity of the Senate Internal Security Subcommittee. But he was trapped; and began to impose order on our affairs.

To this end he began his famous graphs. We have graphs, at NATIONAL REVIEW, charting every quiver in the organization's metabolism. We have graphs that show us how we are doing in circulation, in promotion expenses, in political influence. We have graphs that chart the fidelity to conservative principles of

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most major, and all minor, public figures in America. We have a graph that will tell you at a glance whether Lauren Bacall is more or less conservative than Humphrey Bogart. Our late friend and colleague, Professor Willmoore Kendall, once dumbfounded Bill Rusher by telling him—and Bill enjoys hearing this one again about as I enjoy hearing that I once said that if elected I would demand a recount—Kendall said: "Bill, there is no proposition so simple that it cannot be rendered unintelligible to me by putting it on a graph." But the graphs go on: and, for those who have the stomach for it, they will give you a synoptic understanding of the financial record of NATIONAL REVIEW over the last 31 years.

Bill's fastidious habits gave him an enormous advantage over the rest of us. There was never, for instance, any such phenomenon as an unanswered memorandum from William A. Rusher, and if his future associates in California think it works to say absent-mindedly, "I never *got* that memorandum, Bill" —forget it, as I did, after trying it once thirty years ago, only to be reminded that I had received it in the presence of 14 editors and three photographers. So much is our publisher the creature of habit that, he once confessed to me, on entering the washroom he reaches up to pull down the light-cord; and if it should happen that by mistake the previous patron of the washroom left the light on, why Mr. Rusher turns it off before he can control his reflex action, thus finding himself, as he does several times a year, in total darkness, and without practical recourse to his secretary. Occasionally his admirers show their envy of him, as when, while he was away on a lecture tour, we tiptoed into his office and exactly reversed every reversible physical accoutrement. Thus the picture of Lincoln now hung where the picture of Washington had hung for time immemorial; and the picture of Washington hung where the picture of Lincoln had hung. Thus when he depressed Button One, instead of the bookkeeper, his secretary answered; and when he depressed Button Two, the bookkeeper, not his secretary, answered. And when he turned over the leaves of his calendar, he found himself moving not toward the end of the month but toward the beginning of the month; and when he opened the drawer where his graphs were kept he found not his graphs but his pills; and so on. At which point, rising above it all, he got up to leave the room. We had tried hard to substitute the door leading out of his office for the door leading into his bathroom, but found the problem was metaphysically insoluble. So he left, returned to his apartment, telephoned his secretary on the outside line, issued a few crisp instructions, and retired to his club for the rest of the day, pending the restoration of order.

Holland, *Punch* / Rotheo

Such have been his tribulations at NATIONAL REVIEW. Yet it should not surprise that his colleagues rallied so enthusiastically to the idea of coming together to celebrate his achievements and his person on the eve of his retirement from NATIONAL REVIEW. The most exasperating people in the world are so often the most beloved, and he is no exception. Sometimes, at the fortnightly editorial conference, to which he descends with his notebook and his clippings, to pour vitriol on the ideologically feeble—sometimes he looks about him and, no doubt, feels as Congressman Rich felt surveying the expressions of those whom he would now summon to fiscal rectitude. But his performance at those meetings is one of the great running performances on the ideological stage. His scorn is not alone for those in public life whose activities during the week he finds contemptible, but also for those who lag a bit behind in exhibiting similar scorn. For them—especially if they are his colleagues—his scorn is especially withering. "I notice," he wrote me once after enduring an editorial conference during my absence and running hard into the opposition of some of our younger colleagues, "I notice the difficulty in planting my views against the opposition of Merrill Lynch Pierce Fenner and Smith sitting at the opposite end of the table. I find that Merrill seldom disagrees with Lynch, who seldom disagrees with Pierce, who always disagrees with me. Perhaps you will find an opportunity to suggest a good basic reading list to our younger members." But all is not lost; all is never lost; though there is in front of us the quite unendurable thought of next week's editorial conference without Bill Rusher, next month's financial crisis without Bill Rusher, 1990's election without Bill Rusher. But although it will be elsewhere, Bill will be marching on, gyroscopically certain, ever in command of himself, whether communicating his pleasure, or registering his doubts, or metronomically tut-tutting his disapproval. Always a presence, always a performance; and always—I speak for myself and for those who know him best—a friend to whom we are all grateful. I give you Bill Rusher.* **—WFB**

**William Rusher was hospitalized three days after his retirement party, as previously scheduled, for heart bypass surgery. Six bypasses were performed, and he is progressing, we happily report, excellently.*

—WFB

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* *They also tell us that *'s are very useful ("absolutely essential" was the way they put it). We answered: but isn't the whole idea to see if we can't just come right out and ask intelligent readers to do themselves (and us, of course) a favor,* without *using such gimmicks. But they asked us not to risk it.*

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The ultimate in sound. The

U2: Rattle & Hum • New live set includes the hit Desire, Still Haven't Found What I'm Looking For, more. Island 200596

Anita Baker: Rapture • Sweet Love, Caught Up In The Rapture, You Bring Me Joy, Been So Long, Mystery, more. Elektra 173404

Itzhak Perlman: French Violin Showpieces • Carmen Fantasy, Tzigane, Poème, Havanaise, more. DG *DIGITAL* 115457

Tracy Chapman • Extraordinary singer/songwriter with hit Fast Car, Talkin' Bout A Revolution, Baby Can I Hold You, Mountains O' Things, Why?, etc. Elektra 153582

Guns N' Roses: Appetite For Destruction Welcome To The Jungle, Sweet Child O' Mine, It's So Easy, more. Geffen 170348

Jerry Lee Lewis: Original Sun Greatest Hits • Whole Lotta Shakin' Goin On, Great Balls Of Fire, more. Rhino 154118

Kitaro: The Light Of The Spirit • Sundance, Mysterious Encounter, The Field, In The Beginning, etc. Geffen *DIGITAL* 164228

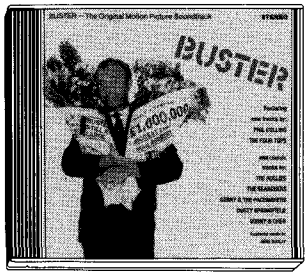
Richard Marx • Endless Summer Nights, Should've Known Better, Don't Mean Nothing, etc. EMI-Manhattan 134073

Jimmy Page: Outrider • Wasting My Time, The Only One, Prison Blues, more. Geffen 123721

Robert Plant: Now And Zen • Dance On My Own, Heaven Knows, Tall Cool One, Ship Of Fools, etc. Es Paranza 134392

Led Zeppelin: Houses Of The Holy D'yer Maker, Over The Hills And Far Away, etc. Atlantic 134321

George Harrison: Cloud Nine • Title song, I Got My Mind Set On You, When We Was Fab, more. Warner/Dark Horse 174328



Phil Collins: Buster 100517

James Taylor's Greatest Hits Warner Bros. 123790

Dire Straits: Brothers In Arms • Money For Nothing, Walk Of Life, So Far Away, more. Warner Bros. *DIGITAL* 114734

Pops In Space • John Williams & The Boston Pops. Music from Close Encounters, Star Wars, others. Philips *DIGITAL* 105392

Rod Stewart: Greatest Hits • Do Ya Think I'm Sexy?, Tonight's The Night, Maggie May, Hot Legs, etc. Warner Bros. 133779

Andrés Segovia Plays Bach • Includes the famous Chaconne. MCA 163600

Poison: Open Up And Say...Ahh • Nothin' But A Good Time, Good Love, Fallen Angel, Love On The Rocks, etc. Capitol/Enigma 173989

Bobby McFerrin: Simple Pleasures Don't Worry Be Happy, All I Want, Drive My Car, title song, Good Lovin', more. EMI-Manhattan 164165

Cream: Disraeli Gears • Sunshine Of Your Love, more. Polydor 104898

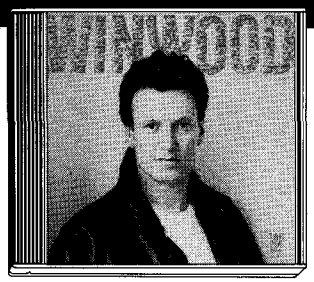
Simon & Garfunkel: The Concert In Central Park • Mrs. Robinson, Bridge Over Troubled Water, etc. Warner Bros. 244006

Alabama: Live RCA 160027

Previn: Gershwin • Rhapsody In Blue, Concerto in F, more. Philips *DIGITAL* 115437

Eagles Greatest Hits, Vol. 1 Asylum 123481

Keith Richards: Talk Is Cheap • Big Enough, How I Wish, Take It So Hard, Struggle, I Could Have Stood You Up, more. Virgin 100518



Steve Winwood: Roll With It 154633

Liz Story: Speechless • Forgiveness, Speechless, Welcome Home, Back Porch, Vigil, Frog Park, more. RCA/Novus 100494

Decade/Best Of Steely Dan MCA 154135

Beethoven, Symphony No. 7; Coriolan & Prometheus Overtures • Royal Philharmonic/Previn. RCA *DIGITAL* 153621

Jethro Tull: Aqualung Chrysalis 124705

Whitney Houston: Whitney • I Wanna Dance With Somebody (Who Loves Me), Didn't We Almost Have It All, more. Arista 152854

Metallica: ...And Justice For All • One, Blackened, title song, To Live Is To Die, Shortest Straw, more. Elektra 200478

Talking Heads: Naked • (Nothing But) Flowers, Mr. Jones, Totally Nude, Blind, The Democratic Circus, The Facts Of Life, etc. Fly/Sire *DIGITAL* 153810

David Sanborn: Close-Up • Lush jazz sax effort! Slam, You Are Everything, J.T., Goodbye, Same Girl, etc. Warner Bros. 134408

Dwight Yoakam: Buenas Noches From A Lonely Room • Title Song, Streets Of Bakersfield (with Buck Owens), more. Reprise 100009

The Best Of The Band Capitol 134485

Classic Old & Gold, Vol. 1 • 20 hits! A Little Bit Of Soul, He's So Fine, A Teenager In Love, Sweet Talkin' Guy, etc. Laurie 134627

INXS: Kick • Need You Tonight, Devil Inside, New Sensation, title song, Never Tear Us Apart, The Loved One, Wild Life, etc. Atlantic *DIGITAL* 153606

The Glenn Miller Orchestra: In The Digital Mood • In The Mood, Chattanooga Choo Choo, more. GRP *DIGITAL* 143293

Tangerine Dream: Phaedra 100510

Steve Winwood: Chronicles • Higher Love, Valerie, While You See A Chance, My Love's Leavin', Talking Back To The Night, more. Island 134501

Pictures At An Exhibition, Night On The Bare Mountain, more • Montreal Symphony/Dutoit. London *DIGITAL* 125314

Whitesnake • Here I Go Again, Still Of The Night, Give Me All Your Love, Crying In The Rain, Bad Boys, more. Geffen 163629

ZZ Top: Afterburner Warner Bros. 164042

Carly Simon: Greatest Hits Live Anticipation, You're So Vain, Coming Around Again, Nobody Does It Better, etc. Arista 154537

Huey Lewis: Small World • Perfect World, Walking With The Kid, World To Me, Better Be True, Old Antone's, etc. Chrysalis 134347

Horowitz Plays Mozart 115436

Najee: Day By Day • Personality, title song, That's The Way Of The World, Tonight I'm Yours, Gina, Najee's Nasty Groove, etc. EMI-Manhattan 100001

Genesis: Invisible Touch • Land Of Confusion, title song, etc. Atlantic 153740

More Dirty Dancing • Do You Love Me, Love Man, Big Girls Don't Cry, Wipeout, Some Kind Of Wonderful, Cry To Me, more. RCA 130766

The Who's Greatest Hits MCA 164160

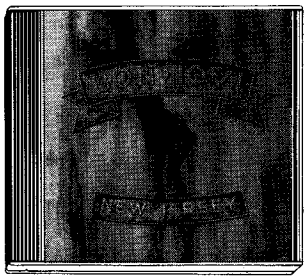
Tchaikovsky, 1812 Overture; Romeo & Juliet; Nutcracker Suite • Chicago Symphony/Solti. London *DIGITAL* 125179

James Galway: Greatest Hits RCA 173233

The Moody Blues: Sur La Mer • I Know You're Out There Somewhere, No More Lies, Here Comes The Weekend, Vintage Wine, etc. Polydor 124546

The Beach Boys: Endless Summer California Girls, Help Me Rhonda, Surfer Girl, more. Capitol 223559

Cinderella: Long Cold Winter • Gypsy Road, Don't Know What You Got (Till It's Gone), The Last Mile, etc. Mercury 114780



Bon Jovi: New Jersey 100516

Strauss, Also sprach Zarathustra Chicago Symphony Orchestra/Reiner. RCA 163627

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Raffi: Singable Songs For The Very Young Shoreline 144494

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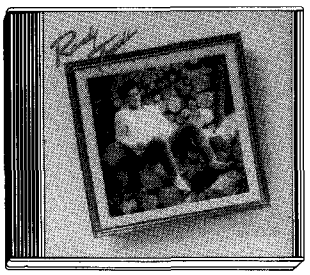
The Sound Of Music/Orig. Soundtrack RCA 100046



Randy Travis: Old 8x10 100008

The Police: Every Breath You Take–The Singles • Don't Stand So Close To Me ('86), Roxanne, etc. A&M 173924

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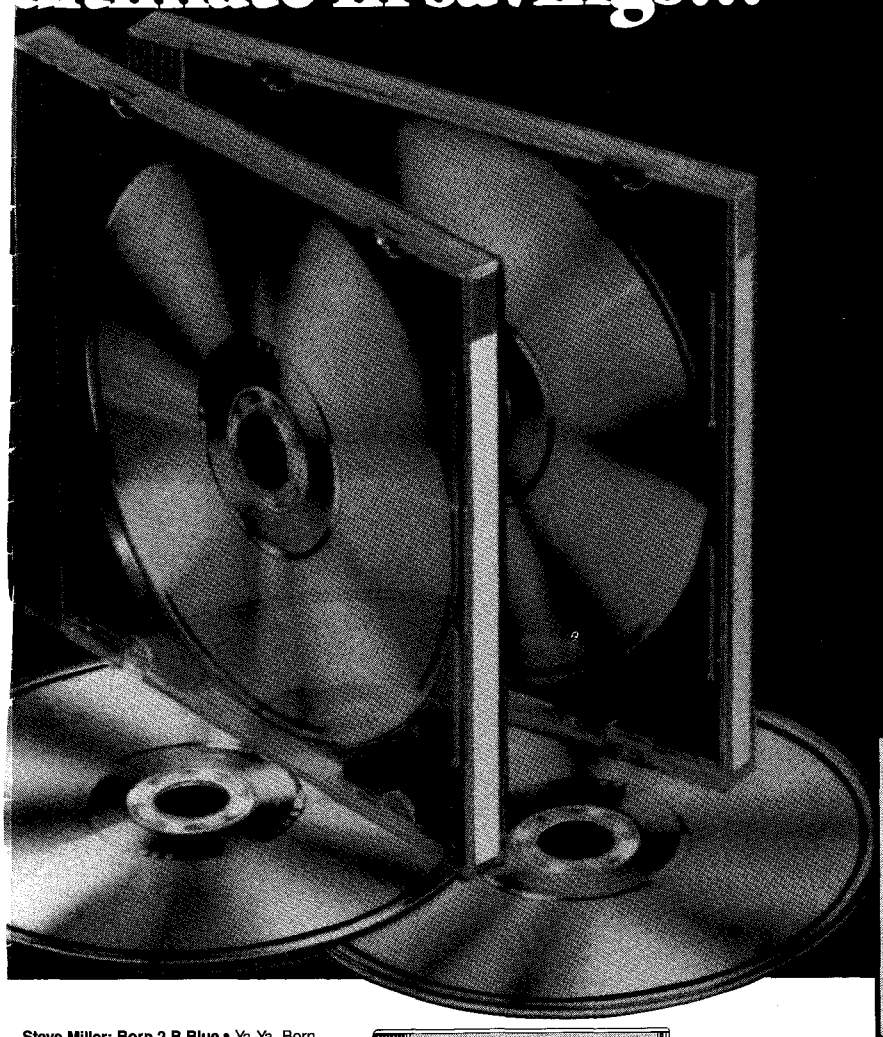

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THE UNPACIFIED PACIFIC

MISNAMED AS EVER, the Pacific is in ferment. To be precise, the South Pacific. Wherever you look, you will find trouble: in Fiji, New Caledonia, Vanuatu (New Hebrides), Papua New Guinea, and elsewhere throughout the region, there are various mixtures of racial tensions and consequent constitutional problems, post-colonial economic malaise, and Soviet and even Libyan involvement.

The eastern half of the big island of New Guinea, known now as Papua New Guinea, feels the weighty presence of Australia to the south, as does Fiji to the east. New Zealand, too, has its interests in the region. As for New Caledonia, recent French administrations may sometimes wish their ancestors had never set foot in it.

When President Mitterrand came to power in 1981, he was spared the need for any deep thinking about New Caledonia because of the extant Socialist ideology about all such places. Independence was the thing, whether the locals wanted it or not. On taking a closer look, however, and (it is said, reliably) on talking to his brother, General Jacques Mitterrand—a former commander-in-chief of France's nuclear deterrent force—he changed his mind. The general pointed out that New Caledonia is rich in strategic minerals and well endowed with offshore oil.

Furthermore (said the general) there was an even bigger issue at stake. If the president conferred independence, then he would come under pressure to do the same for French Polynesia, where France's nuclear testing site of Mururoa was located. This in turn could seriously undermine France's ability to stay in the nuclear club and thus to play a world role.

In January 1985, thus briefed, President Mitterrand paid a lightning visit to Noumea, the capital of New Caledonia. He was treated to a monster pro-French rally. Thereafter, the word "independence" stopped tumbling out of his mouth. Instead, he started referring to "the interests of France." With this change of terminology alone, the strategic significance of the South Pacific becomes manifest. And also its complexity.

The Soviets have been (literally) fishing in these troubled waters for a long time. Having heard the words "nuclear" and "strategic minerals," we should not be surprised. The United States, as a Pacific superpower, tends to pay less attention to these troubled islands than to, say, the Philippines or Japan. Yet America cannot safely avert its eyes from an area of dispute between France and New Zealand (over the scandalous *Rainbow Warrior* affair of three years ago)—especially as the New Zealand government of Mr. David Lange, by denying harbor to U.S. nuclear vessels, has badly shaken the old ANZUS alliance.

In all of these islands, but especially in New Caledonia and Fiji, the concept as well as the practice of democracy is under severe strain. In both, the indigenous population is outnumbered by settlers, so that "one man, one vote" yields results unacceptable to those with long ancestral memories.

It is all a question of proportions. In Australia (and for that matter, the U.S.A.), the original inhabitants are too few to have political muscle. The Australian Aborigines boycotted the recent two-hundredth-anniversary celebrations, but are not about to impose Aboriginal rule on white (or yellow) Australians. Where numbers are more evenly matched, there are problems.

In Fiji (independent since 1970), the ethnic Indians, imported in recklessly large numbers in the high noon of the British Raj, outnumber the autochthonous Melanesians, and they dominated Fijian politics—until last year. Their power was based on numbers, i.e., votes. That is democracy, after all. However, the Melanesians retained two non-numerical elements of power: land and control of the armed forces. So, in 1987, they did a spot of rectification, when Colonel (now Brigadier General) Sitiveni Rabuka seized power, relinquished it, then seized it again (in May and September respectively: see *NR*, December 4, 1987).

Those were the nice bits. The nasty ones were that Queen Elizabeth II, as nominal Head of State, disapproved; and that the Fijian economy declined by 11 per cent during the eight-month period of the two coups.

So, the strongman had second (or rather, third) thoughts. Having proclaimed a republic, Rabuka relinquished power to the Queen's representative, Governor-General Sir Penaia Ganilau, who changed his title to President and appointed a civilian government. For the Melanesians, all was not lost: Rabuka himself became the home-affairs minister, and 17 of the 21 ministers were Melanesians. Rabuka consoled his co-ethnics by promising a constitution that would guarantee a permanent Melanesian majority. Question: Will that still be democracy?

NEW CALEDONIA'S indigenous Kanaks must have cast many an envious glance in Fiji's direction. The Kanaks are the largest ethnic group, but still a minority (60,000 out of 145,000; note the numbers: we are talking about micro-states, with Fiji, much the larger, a mere 620,000 in total). Having taken in the undesirability of independence, Mitterrand decreed not one but two referenda during 1988 to demonstrate that the popular will, as thus measured, supported his view of New Caledonia's future.

The referendum conducted in New Caledonia itself in September produced more than 98 per cent in favor of staying in the French Republic; a further vote in Metropolitan France in November showed an 80 per cent majority against independence. Impressive? Less than it seemed: in the September referendum, some 42 per cent of voters stayed at home; in the November

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one, the boycott (or indifference) share was just under 63 per cent. Jean-Marie Tjibaou, leader of the disaffected Kanak Socialist National Front (FLNKS), claimed that 83.2 per cent of Kanaks had abstained in September, and said he could not rule out further violence. In fact, violent clashes between Kanak militants and local soldiers punctuated the whole year.

What we are witnessing from afar is one better than a post-colonial situation: it is a post-post-colonial one. The older emancipated dominions cannot ignore the goings-on next door. The newly emancipated micro-states are enjoying the toxic pleasures of democracy and national assertiveness. They are also finding out that "the morning after" brings larger outside threats—threats which, in the ordered world of yesterday, they could safely leave to distant metropolitan powers.

One of the most anomalous of the new micro-states is Vanuatu (population, 123,900). Long administered as an Anglo-French condominium (as the New Hebrides), it gained self-rule in 1978 and full independence two years later. Only recently had the Melanesians been allowed to take part in politics. Independence brought further division, with a rift between Anglophone Protestant Melanesians and Francophone Catholics. The Anglophones dominate the rest through the majority Vanuaaku Party of the prime minister, the Reverend Walter Lini.

All of the familiar symptoms of "independence" are there, in microcosm. *Economic deterioration:* The local currency (the *vatu*) was twice devalued in 1987. *Constitutional impasse:* Last July, Lini expelled opposition MPs en masse; on December 20 he arrested the prime minister named to replace him. *Slaps in the face for an old colonial power:* In October 1987, Lini expelled the French ambassador for allegedly providing "substantial financial assistance" to a rival party. (A year later, Lini told the French they could come back.) *Dangerous flirtations:* With the USSR and Libya.

The Libyan lapse came when Lini invited Muammar Qaddafi to open a "people's bureau." From Australia, Mr. Robert Hawke protested; Vanuatu first banned all Australian military ships and aircraft, then relented, deciding to expel the two Libyan diplomats who had responded to the invitation.

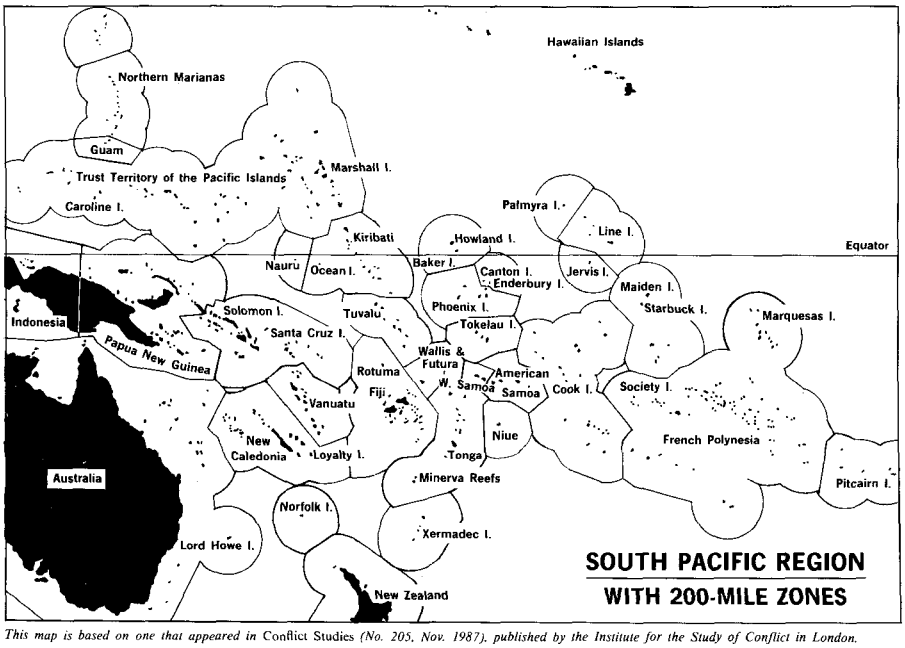
As for the Soviet Union, Moscow saw Vanuatu as a tempting target for its fishing vessels, notoriously equipped with sophisticated electronic spying devices. In need of cash, Lini's government exchanged fishing rights (outside the 12-mile limit) for a Soviet fee of $1.5 million, to the accompaniment of hostile Western mutterings.

Worried though Canberra is by Vanuatu, it is far more perturbed by developments in Fiji and Papua New Guinea (PNG). Last spring, five Fijians were arrested in Australia on charges of smuggling arms through Australia to Fiji. The Australian police revealed the existence of a network of hundreds of Fijians involved in the exercise. The arms were all of Soviet or East European origin, and included Kalashnikov assault rifles and anti-tank weapons. They had been loaded in North Yemen. The apparent aim was to equip a revolutionary force to take power in Fiji. In November the leader of the 1987 coups, General Rabuka, declared his readiness to take over a third time —if invited by the government!

The veteran Australian student of subversion, Bob Santamaria, extrapolating from the police statement, postulated a support network led by the pro-Soviet Socialist Party of Australia, the Trotskyist Socialist Workers' Party, and the usual mix of trade unions, church groups, and others, with ramifications in the Philippines and New Caledonia as well as in Fiji.

In PNG, long under Australian rule, Soviet involvement is more subtle and insidious. Moscow has been offering scholarships to PNG students and (of course) fishing agreements. A sign of the post-post-colonial era: some months ago, a Soviet student delegation was given a warm welcome at Port Moresby, whereas the French ambassador was told he was unwelcome at Lae University of Technology, when he turned up bearing a volcanological gift.

One very real long-term threat does seem to have been averted, however. PNG's pro-Soviet communications minister, Gabriel Ramoi, had introduced legislation giving the government control of the media, in line with the Soviet proposals for Third World countries put forward through UNESCO ten years ago. But Ramoi lost his job in a cabinet reshuffle last July and the threat is thought to have receded.



This map is based on one that appeared in Conflict Studies *(No. 205, Nov. 1987), published by the Institute for the Study of Conflict in London.*

WHERE, IN ALL this ferment, lie the interests of the superpowers? The Soviet Pacific fleet has trebled since 1970 and is the largest of the four Soviet fleets. The ballistic-missile-bearing submarine fleet guards Moscow's nuclear-strike capability. The Soviets control their zone of the North Pacific (the Sea of Okhotsk) via Sakhalin and the Kuriles.

A friendly government or two in the South Pacific would greatly extend that fundamental security. Conversely, the United States' strategic interest would be gravely weakened by any such extension of Soviet influence. It is bad enough dealing with a sulky, anti-nuclear New Zealand and a determinedly independent French presence without fresh problems of that kind. □

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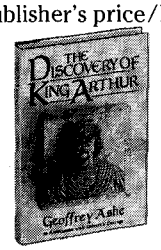

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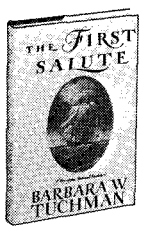

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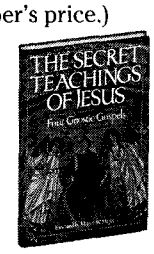

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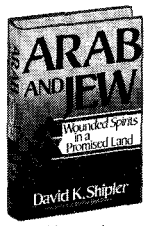

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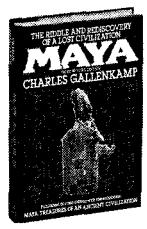

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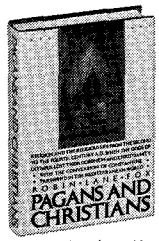

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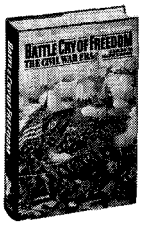

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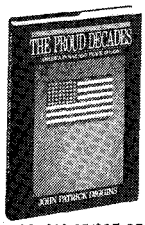

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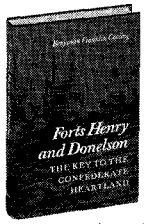

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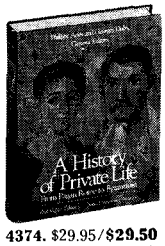

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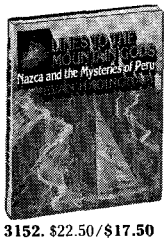

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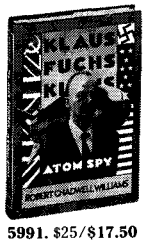

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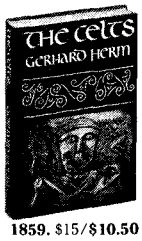

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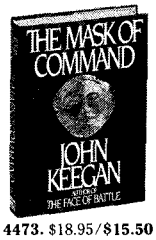

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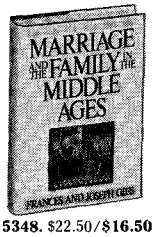

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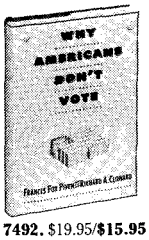

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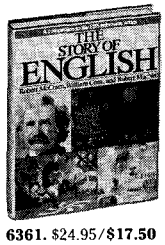

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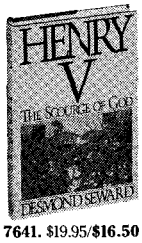

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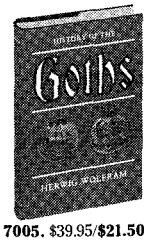

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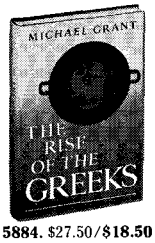

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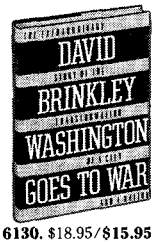

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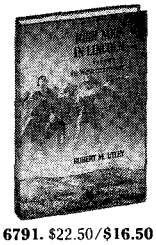

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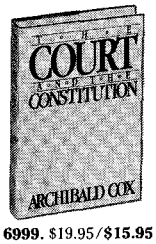

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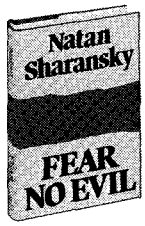

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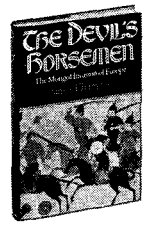

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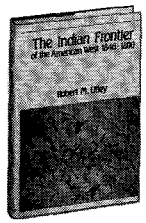

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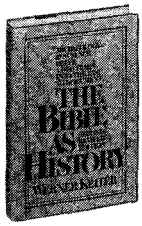

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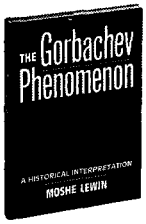

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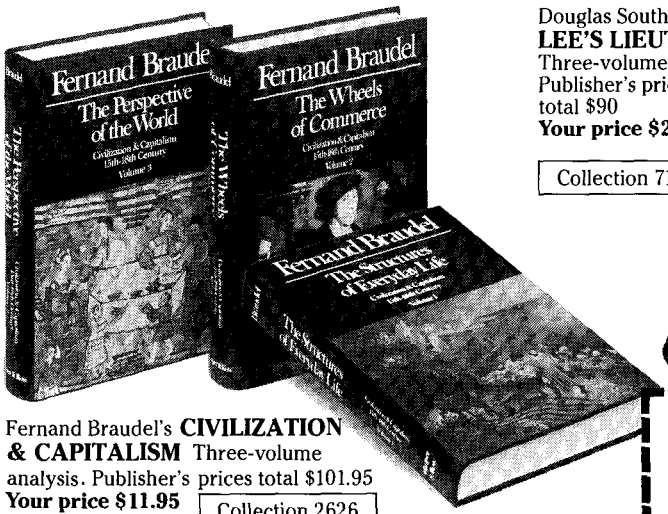

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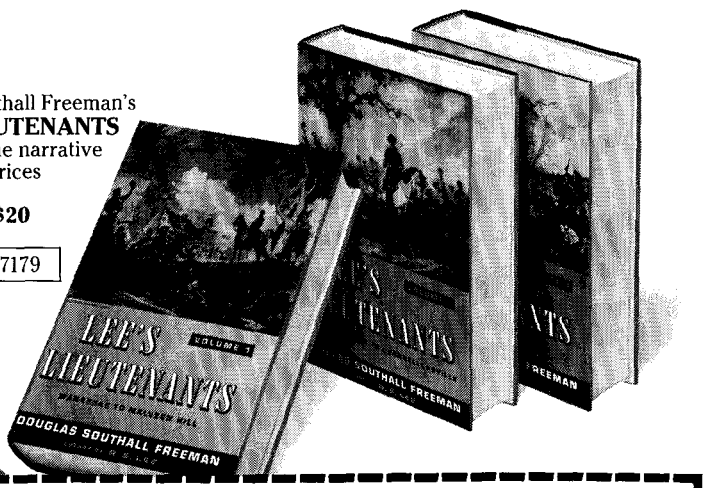

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FROM TALLINN TO KIEV TO LENINAKAN

New strains in the Soviet empire appear almost daily, but the West must beware: The Kremlin will not give in without a struggle, and attempts to repress Eastern European nationalism have already led to two world wars in this century.

THE COMING CRACK-UP OF COMMUNISM

DECLINE OR FALL?

RADEK SIKORSKI

An elderly woman in a peasant scarf lights a candle and kneels piously at the altar in the Vilnius Cathedral—recently restored to the Catholic Church after decades of serving as a Museum of Atheism. A food queue several dozen strong stands pliantly in the dawn cold in front of a shabby state monopoly store in Moscow. Deputies of the Supreme Soviet of the Estonian Republic spectacularly declare for genuine autonomy, defying the line from Moscow. In Yerevan, soldiers enforcing the state of emergency keep themselves warm around a fire next to a snow-shrouded tank.

Such scenes of Soviet life on our television screens—poignant signs of, respectively, the ideological, economic, and constitutional failure of the Soviet system—do not even surprise us any more. Thanks to Mikhail Gorbachev, the most gullible of our fellow-travelers now admit that the rot has penetrated deep into the fabric of Soviet life.

If the Soviet regime represents the future, then nobody wants to live in it. By the Soviets' own admission the dream of a new Soviet man—secular, hard-working, and internationalist (though speaking Russian as the lingua franca of the empire)—has vanished. Instead of a Stakhanovite *Homo sovieticus*, the breach in the official facade has revealed down-trodden individual Ukrainians, Estonians, and Kazakhs, resentful equally of Communism and of the Russian chauvinists who enforce it.

But most strikingly, the socialist illusion that a planned economy would prove superior to the modern market system has finally collapsed. For those who have long been skeptical about the Soviet Union, the most gratifying aspect of the current Soviet self-flagellation on this head is that in criticizing the Soviet performance and recommending *perestroika*, Soviet economists and even Party officials do not use Marxist categories at all. Instead they talk of economic incentives, sound accounting, healthy currency, and the virtues of individual initiative (where else do we hear this?). In short, they are rediscovering common sense.

Fifty years after Stalin announced that the Soviet Union had entered socialism and nine years after the date by which Khrushchev promised that the Soviet Union would reach "full Communism," the Soviet Union turns out to be in deep crisis and in need of a radical "restructuring." Let us note, for future reference, that in 1988 President Gorbachev promised an individual apartment for every Soviet family by the year 2000. May this pious hope stand as the measure of Soviet failure.

Since the sickness of its economy is probably at the root of most other Soviet ailments, the question arises: Can it be cured? Can *perestroika* succeed? Whatever the theoretical arguments about Gorbachev's chances of success, the fact is that serious restructuring has not even begun.

Glasnost there is aplenty, but *perestroika*, according to a recent Soviet joke, is like the *taiga*, the Siberian pine forest: very noisy high up, where the wind soughs in the crowns, but very quiet down below, where people walk. And the chances for fundamental reform are slim, for, as Leo Labedz has observed, in a curious perversion of history, Marxist categories apply more to the Soviet Union in its age of decline than they do to modern free-market societies. Adopting the Soviet jargon, one might say that the core of the Soviet political superstructure—the leading role of the Party—has become a fetter on the country's productive forces.

What constrains the Soviet economy from performing better is not this or that accounting procedure, nor even the economy's unwieldy organizational structure—some Japanese concerns are bigger than whole Soviet ministries. The long-term impediment is the negative selection of personnel at all levels of authority—based on loyalty to the *nomenklatura*, not talent or efficiency. Gorbachev himself has admitted as much by criticizing those who resist him. Negative selection of personnel—whereby Party cells in each organizational unit have the power of appointment and dismissal for all posts—is the primary cause of the Soviet disease. It also happens to be the *sine qua non* of the system.

Whatever the proposals for reform, the *nomenklatura* remains the ruling class, and this is hardly surprising. What

Mr. Sikorski is NR*'s correspondent-at-large. His new book,* The Dust of the Saints, *will be published this year by Chatto and Windus.*

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Gorbachev is about is saving that class from the consequences of its misdeeds, not persuading it to commit group suicide.

Even without the burden of the costly Afghan war, the excessive military spending, and disruptions such as Chernobyl and the Armenian earthquake, the Soviet economy is likely to continue to slide, to grow at a slower and slower rate decade by decade. Even doctored Soviet statistics acknowledge the trend. The growth rates may be bumped up by injections of Western capital, but without fundamental reform this will only delay the day of reckoning. Yugoslavia above all—where the brew of economic failure and national recriminations is similar to that of the Soviet Union—but also Poland, Hungary, and Rumania show what happens in the long term when a Communist regime borrows its way out of imminent crisis. Enforcing a Protestant work ethic under the rule of the *nomenklatura* is proving impossible all over the Communist world. The Soviet circle cannot be squared.

CONTINUING the Marxist thought experiment we may assume that the fundamental contradiction in the makeup of the Soviet system cannot fail to eventually translate economic strains into political ones. This is happening already, before our very eyes. Though for different reasons, the Estonians, Armenians, and Azerbaidzhanis are on the march. The most striking fact about the eruptions of defiance in those republics was that not only the populace but the institutions of the Soviet state themselves defied Moscow's directives. In each case the center lost its grip on events, at least temporarily. Might this happen again soon on a larger scale?

At the conclusion of a year in which the Soviet Army has all but withdrawn from a poor country it had intended to subdue, defeated by men who by Soviet doctrine are feudal savages, it is appropriate to ask: Is the time now? Is the most bloodthirsty regime in the history of mankind finally about to disintegrate? Are we approaching 1905, the dress rehearsal for revolution, or already 1917, the real thing?

Alas, the 1917 scenario is about as likely to come true as the promise an Afghan commander gave me in his mountain camp last year: "When we've defeated the Soviets here, we will fight on. First we will liberate Samarkand and Bukhara, and then march on Moscow. You think I'm joking? You will see, my men will follow me to Moscow. We will come and liberate you in Poland too." Like the above, this is just a fantasy about the evil empire, understandable only in a man drunk with victory.

There are internal strains in the Soviet society but, as James Sherr has observed, "Order in the USSR will remain a function of whether the regime is respected, not whether it is liked." The resentments among the USSR's nationalities will probably grow, but they promise to explode only in the most European regions of the country, not in the Muslim borderlands.

Consider just this strain in the wishfully apocalyptic view of the future of the Soviet Union. The Muslims are supposed to be a deadly threat to the unity of the empire on account of their birth rate; if the present trends continue, in a couple of decades the Russian share of the population will drop below half and the Muslim share will grow to about a fifth. Muslim soldiers will eventually have to be given positions of authority—and we know what happens to empires that depend for defense on their conquered races.

But to construe the "Muslim resurgence" as a mortal danger to the Soviet Union is to forget that most of the "Muslims" referred to are not fanatics pining for martyrdom, but third-generation Soviet citizens. Soviet Tadzhiks, Uzbeks, and Kazakhs cannot even read the Koran (Arabic script is not taught), have no mosques to pray in, and hardly know their own history. A great proportion—the majority, according to some estimates—are secular. Some Central Asian units were withdrawn from Afghanistan at the start of the war because of their uncertain loyalty, but what is less known is that, throughout the war, up to a third of the occupying force in Afghanistan consisted of fellow "Muslim" soldiers. Yet we know of no instance of a mutiny by Soviet soldiers in Afghanistan.

The fact of the matter is that, as empires go, the Russian one contains an unusually high proportion of the master race. Romans, Incas, Mongols, Arabs were all small minorities in their empires, to say nothing of the hundred thousand Englishmen who ruled over hundreds of millions of Indians. In addition to their numerical strength, the Russians enjoy a superior, central territorial position within the empire from which they can conveniently send expeditionary forces to quell rebellions in the borderlands. Last but not least, the vendetta between Armenia and Azerbaidzhan should dispel any hopes that Soviet nationalities might be able to cooperate in resisting Moscow; even Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania, so close geographically and culturally, have failed to act in concert. In the time-honored fashion, the Kremlin will use Central Asian troops to shoot at the Balts and Ukrainians, and vice versa. If a serious rebellion does erupt in Estonia and is put down, take a good look at the soldiers' faces—I'll bet they'll be swarthy.

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As with everything else in the Soviet Union, behind the façade of official reality there lurks a "real reality," which is the true causal framework. The most perfunctory look at the top ranks of the *nomenklatura* suffices to show that n most posts that matter—be it in the army, the state, the KGB, or the Party—it is the Russians who rule. Behind the façade of Marxist-Leninist ideology the real reality of Great Russian nationalism is emerging as the actual glue holding together the imperial edifice. For a while the two strands have been indistinguishably intertwined. But the smaller the appeal of Marxism, and the clearer the national character of the forces pulling the Soviet Union apart, the more obvious the Russian-imperialist nature of the edifice will be. The conflicts in the Soviet Union today are not over the old ideology; disputes over the meaning of socialism are mere shadow-boxing. The real conflicts are and will be over which language shall be used in courts, in schools, and on official documents in the various republics, over who shall pass laws for them, over how many Russians should be allowed in or deported, or where the republic's boundaries should lie. After all the early promises of overcoming the alienation of man, of delivering universal prosperity, justice, and brotherhood—and the awesome betrayal of those promises in the nightmare of the Gulag—the Soviet Union proves to be just the last old-fashioned multinational empire.

The Soviet empire will not come down in a big thrilling crash. The previous time a Russian regime fell, it was only after three years of a bloody world war, a circumstance not likely to recur or, if repeated, to leave this issue very topical. To be sure, the Soviet Union is an invalid, the sick man of Eurasia, to coin a phrase, but instead of a heart attack, it will perish of a painful, long-drawn-out illness. It will die of AIDS or, more accurately, of leprosy, in which bits of the victim's body progressively fall away —except that in the case of this patient the severed members are likely to return to pink health. Timothy Garton Ash has called this process of imperial decline "Ottomanization," a dialectical cycle of attempted reform and reversal, of liberalization and crackdown, of peace offensives and belligerence.

The current rush to provide untied credits to the Soviet regime proves that we have not even asked ourselves seriously how best to manage the decline of the Soviet empire, let alone agreed how to do so prudently and in concert. This question—how to ease the Russians as painlessly as possible out of their empire—will be the greatest intellectual and political challenge for conservatives in the tail end of our century. A sick man with a gun is still a man with a gun. We must find a prescription so that this old sclerotic passes away quietly and does not get an opportunity to pull the trigger. We must not fall into the conservative trap of believing that if only the Soviet Union would transform itself into traditional "Russia" everything would be well—Russia being a long-established entity capable of abiding by the international rules. By the milder standards of its time czarist Russia was also a tyranny and a prison of nations. We would be forsaking our values if we betrayed the subject nations of Eastern Europe simply because the idiom of domination changed. The attempts to suppress Eastern Europeans' national aspirations have already caused two world wars. Their future is on the agenda again now. □

AND IN THE UKRAINE

RICHARD GRENIER

In mid November, with world attention focused on the Baltic and on bad blood between the Armenians and the Azerbaidzhanis, some ten thousand young people demonstrated in Kiev against nuclear power in the Ukraine, whose plants account for 50 per cent of the Soviet Union's energy. The demonstration, a few miles from the disaster area of Chernobyl, was finally broken up with fifty arrests but almost entirely escaped notice by the Western press. Yet Ukrainian nationalism, which in a real sense was the point of the demonstration, is more threatening to the Soviet regime than any separatist movement in Latvia or Estonia.

Oles Shevchenko, one of the demonstration's organizers, had earlier spent seven years in the Gulag; in November I interviewed him in Kiev while a half-dozen watchful KGB men waited outside in the snow. Shevchenko said all these disturbances in the outlying republics are alike in that essentially what these people want is *freedom*. And it will come, he insisted. One of the first prisoners of the notorious Perm 36 camp to be released under *glasnost*, Shevchenko is convinced that the Soviet system has a limited life expectancy and that, if not exactly in its death throes, it is losing its hold. His Ukrainian Helsinki Watch organization calls for nothing short of the Soviet Union's transformation into a "federation of free and independent nations." Gorbachev, Shevchenko believes, has "no definitive opinions on anything," which is just as well. His present actions, the grandiloquent calls for *glasnost* and *perestroika*, are compelled by grim economic necessity, and the economic pressure is still on. In the Ukraine, November's anti-nuclear demonstration was only the first step, Shevchenko promised. One day "the Ukraine will be master in its own house."

This will be a great deal harder for the Kremlin to stomach than claims of "sovereignty" or even secession by Estonia—population: 1.5 million. At fifty million, the Ukraine is the second largest republic in the Soviet Union —second only to the Russian republic itself—with twice the area of Poland and one and a half times its population. It harbors a smoldering nationalist movement that from Moscow's viewpoint is the most powerful and dangerous of all the USSR's "nationalities problems," and of which Moscow is consequently the least tolerant. Despite the daily fulminations in the Soviet press against Leonid Brezhnev's "period of stagnation," a granite holdover from the Brezhnev era, Vladimir Shcherbitsky, is still in power in the Ukraine as General Secretary of the Ukrainian Communist Party. And Shcherbitsky's hand lies heavy.

The Ukrainians are a Slavic people with at least as ancient a lineage as the Russians, and with their own language, which is close to Polish. Their persistent refusal to be assimilated by their fellow Slavs offends Russians as no

Mr. Grenier is a columnist for the Washington Times *and London* Sunday Telegraph. *His novel,* The Marrakesh One-Two *(1984), is still in print in Penguin.*

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Balt ever could. Russians, who account for 52 per cent of the Soviet population, by far its dominant culture, seem to consider Ukrainians as some kind of left-handed version of themselves, although Kiev was the capital of Kievan Rus, the first major state of the eastern Slavs, centuries before medieval chronicles even mentioned the village of Moscow. Kiev was also the capital of Vladimir I, the millennium of whose conversion to Christianity was celebrated in the USSR this past year with some pomp. Ukrainians are admitted into all-Slavic (racist) elite Soviet military units just like Russians. Although they suffered monstrously at Stalin's hands during the forced collectivization of the 1930s (with 15 million Ukrainians dead, one of the most terrible holocausts of the age), Ukrainians are not now discriminated against socially as are natives of the USSR's Central Asian republics. And yet, three hundred years after being incorporated into the Russian empire, Ukrainians stubbornly, perversely, refuse to surrender their cultural identity and become Russians. Natan Sharansky (Anatoly Shcharansky) has said that for Moscow, given the Ukraine's size and position in the heartland, Ukrainian nationalism is "unmanageable."

Desperate after the forced collectivization and famine of the Thirties, and not yet acquainted with the Nazis, Ukrainians greeted the invading German armies in 1941 as liberators, which has never been forgotten in Moscow. For Ukrainian dissidents, their nationalist feelings and hostility to the Soviet system are closely intertwined, and these days Ukrainian nationalism draws to it every deviant and counterculture movement in this quarter-million-square-mile republic: environmentalists, Tolstoyans, rockers, "hippies." Since 1985, informal non-conforming youth organizations have been burgeoning in the Ukraine and are now estimated to include 7 to 8 per cent of the relevant age group in the region.

To receive authorization, organizers of Soviet demonstrations under *glasnost* must submit their slogans in advance and adhere closely to their announced purpose. The Kiev anti-nuclear demonstration had the following slogans rejected: GLASNOST WITHOUT VEIL OF SECRECY (judged not apposite), FOR A NUCLEAR-FREE UKRAINE (judged excessive), and GREENS UNITE (perhaps because of the seditious ring of "unite"). The main authorized slogan was: SAVE THE UKRAINE FROM REACTORS AND BUREAUCRATS. But the demonstration was only the "first step," stressed Shevchenko. The ultimate goal is freedom.

"IT ALWAYS BAFFLES me when Western experts call the present situation here 'Communism in crisis,'" he said. "We've never had a Communist system here. The prime mover in Soviet society is not Communism, or the Communist Party, or Marxism-Leninism, but the KGB. That's what this is about, not socialism."

For a man who had served seven years in Perm 36, doing 65 straight days of punitive solitary confinement in thin cotton clothing in an ice-lined cell, fed meagerly every other day, Oles Shevchenko seemed quite fearless. When he emerged from the hotel, a half-dozen men were waiting for him in the snowy night. They kept their distance, eyeing him coldly. Shevchenko wouldn't get into a taxi waiting directly in front of the building. "A KGB taxi," he laughed. "Who knows where it would take me?" He found another cab at the corner, and some of the watching men followed him in their car as the snow fell under the streetlights. If Oles Shevchenko was awed by his unequal struggle with the most repressive state in modern history, which had killed tens of millions of its own people, he did not show it. If anything, as he drove off in the taxi, he seemed rather chipper. □

FROM THE RUBBLE

JOHN LLOYD

NOTHING HAD PREPARED ME to witness the desolation of the Armenian earthquake, neither years of describing the effects of terror in Northern Ireland nor the shock of the Greek-Turkish conflict in Cyprus in 1974. War carries its own rough cure of hatred: a natural calamity provides no such obvious conduit.

It is, of course, not so much the huge extent of the ruination of Leninakan, Spitak, and some of their surrounding villages; not even the sight, still common eight and nine days after the event, of bodies with their flesh blackening being dragged from the rubble. It is the comprehensive desolation of the survivors: the zomboid gait of the groups of unshaven men who pass along the streets; the miserable stares of the women huddling about the wood fires they have lit outside the collapsed masses of their former homes.

Lack of relative experience also makes it hard to assess how much worse or better the rescue efforts are than they could have been. The survivors thought them bad, but perhaps that is inevitable: less easily dismissed, the foreign rescue workers voiced both diplomatic and overt complaints; and these complaints were amplified in the Soviet press and in statements by Nikolai Ryzhkov, the Soviet Prime Minister, who chaired the Politburo commission coordinating relief work. Remarkably, a consensus quickly emerged that foreign aid was efficiently delivered, whereas Soviet aid was sloppy and ill-organized: remarkably, for here was a society which until a few years ago had officially held the belief that Soviet provision was ipso facto superior to all other. Perhaps, in allowing this fiction to be challenged, the authorities have had to endure the swing of the pendulum.

My own impressions, possibly overdetermined by the Soviet press, were that the rescue efforts suffered from the same problem that self-confessedly afflicts much of the Soviet economy and society: that of habitually looking to the top for every direction. Ryzhkov seemed energetic and forceful (an impression, to be sure, easily conveyed on a servant media): below his level, the familiar imperatives of a form-filling society—in which managerial enterprise has been until now discouraged—have worked to ensure that the provision was slow to be mobilized, was inadequate or wrongly focused when it finally arrived, and could smack of indifference at the point of delivery. An impression I

Mr. Lloyd, who is on the staff of the Financial Times, *has been reporting from Moscow for the last six months.*

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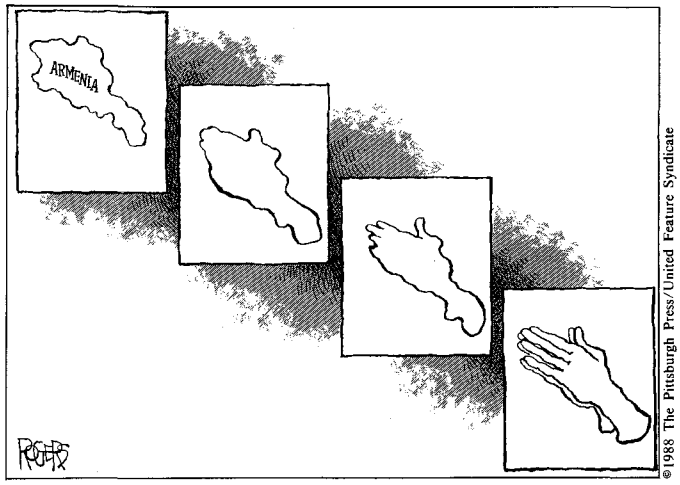

shared with fellow correspondents and with foreign-aid workers was that the large numbers of Soviet troops did little but patrol with rifles slung, keeping civil order and guarding against the reportedly common looters. I saw some groups digging for bodies, but many more sitting about outside their tents. The food supplies were, on survivors' reports, poor and erratic: one woman complained bitterly (with a surrounding crowd agreeing) that food rations were merely those provisions salvaged from collapsed *produkty*—mostly, the canned fish they all have in abundance and no one seems to wish to buy.

On the other hand, I met some who expressed thanks not just to the foreign rescue efforts, but to the Soviet people and government for their response. And it is true that the general public response *was* warm, with 150 million rubles flooding in to the special bank account within eight days of the earthquake. I was in Riga, the Latvian capital, two days after the quake: the conference I was attending began with a minute's silence, a speech from the Latvian Prime Minister, and a terrifically warmly received appearance by an Armenian professor who taught at Riga University—and who came from Leninakan. One Muscovite woman said to me that merely being *allowed* to express a real rather than a synthetic solidarity was a novelty to be savored in itself.

Political considerations now emerge from the rubble. The Armenian earthquake had a political as well as geophysical epicenter: the former being the state of barely restrained hostility existing between Armenia and the neighboring Soviet republic of Azerbaidzhan. The focus of that hostility is Nagorno-Karabakh, the largely Armenian enclave, designated an autonomous area, but under the tutelage of Azerbaidzhan. The Armenians want it to be attached to Armenia, the Azeris refuse to relinquish it. Through much of 1988, since the Sumgait riots saw an Azeri mob kill nearly thirty Armenians and rape and rob many more, the two republics have been held back from outright action only by the intervention of Moscow.

This particularly resonant dispute—the Armenians remember, passionately remember, the massacre of half their race by the Turks in 1915: the Azeris are Turkic Muslims—is of course set among others. The appearance of powerful popular fronts in Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania, which, especially in the case of Estonia, appear to be setting the agendas for the governments of the republics; the weaker but perhaps no less alarming copies of these movements in Georgia, Ukraine, Byelorussia, and Moldavia; the explicit symmetry being proposed by popular-fronters between *glasnost* and republican autonomy; the growing anger of intellectuals in the republics over the decades of twisted histories their cultures have had to endure; the alarms that they are losing their languages and separate identities—all of these have made up a swelling theme in the Soviet Union over the past year.

These particular and general contexts meant that the instant attempt by the Soviet leadership to reveal the earthquake's silver lining as being a wave of sympathy from Azerbaidzhan to Armenia was stillborn. Only eight days after the quake, Yevgeny Chazov, the Health Minister, was irritably telling journalists that of course Armenians were not being sent to hospitals in Azerbaidzhan and that "you can imagine why not." Armenians threatened the lives of Azeri crane drivers sent with their vehicles to the ruined towns: Azeris sent telegrams of "congratulations" to the victims.

On his return from New York, Mikhail Gorbachev spent two days touring the affected area, and walking about Yerevan. He had a rough time, especially in Yerevan: so bad, indeed, that the evening network news showed no film of his walkabout, only black-and-white stills. During a 25-minute interview—more of a monologue—at Yerevan airport en route back to Moscow, the Soviet President delivered himself of an outburst against those who had brought up the subject of Karabakh to his face: "What kind of people are they?" he asked. He must have known, since his security forces had jailed up to 15 members and supporters of the Karabakh Committee, the group that does most to keep the nationalist flame alive in Armenia.

Many, even in desolate Leninakan, were concerned to tell a foreign journalist of their support for the Karabakh Committee and their disapproval of Gorbachev's outburst: in Yerevan the disaffection was much worse. It is too early, at the end of 1988, to tell how the ethnic hatred will flare once more between Armenians and Azeris: it is not too early to judge that Gorbachev has the narrowest of spaces in which to maneuver, and little goodwill on which to trade.

In terms of Soviet politics, to take Karabakh away from Azerbaidzhan is to court an explosion not just from the Azeris, but from the Central Asian Muslims too. They have let the nationalist upsurge pass them by, so far; indeed, they have been, on the surface, the loyalest supporters of those in the Moscow leadership who have sought to slap down the Baltic states. Their leaderships, with long traditions of corruption and cronyism which Gorbachev's reforms and anti-Mafia measures will surely not wholly have extirpated, do rather well out of Moscow rule: but an offense to brother Muslims might spark a popular movement difficult to control.

Here, then, is a leader trapped between a rock and a hard place: between two resurgent or potentially resurgent nationalisms. If Armenian anguish chooses to fix on the leadership's so-far consistent refusal to alter the status of Karabakh, that tortured people may yet, and may soon, provide the first large-scale revolt Gorbachev has had to handle: though it will be a revolt as much against a cruel history and fate as against the leadership in Moscow. □

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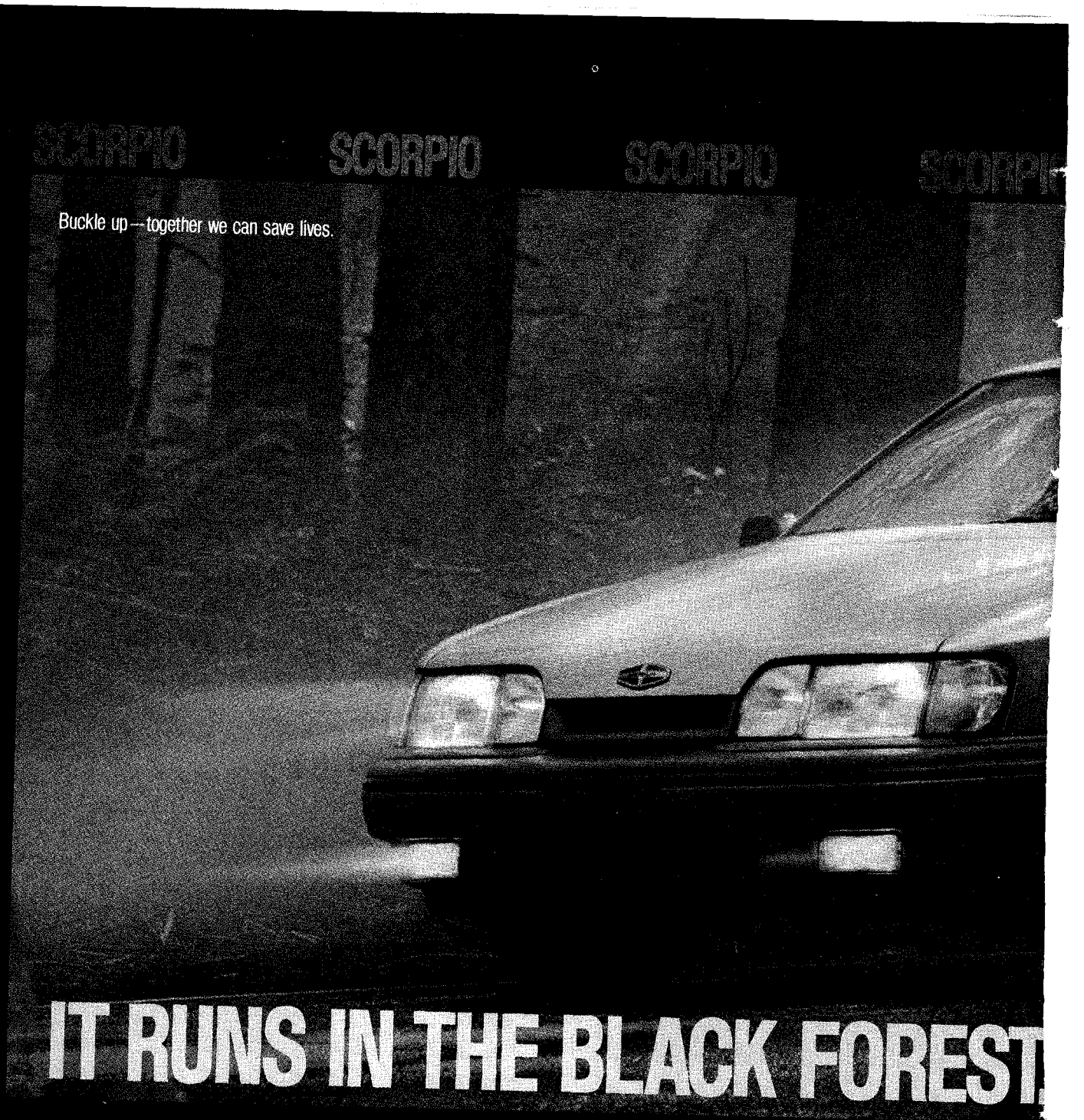

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31 YEARS BEFORE THE MASTHEAD

From The Affair of a Couple of Phone Calls to "Mr. Rusher, the President is calling," the outgoing publisher looks back (mostly) fondly on 31 years lashed to NR*'s masthead, and looks forward to the next generation.*

NOW IT CAN BE TOLD

WILLIAM A. RUSHER

"THIS IS your office," Bill Buckley told me solemnly. It was Thursday morning, July 25, 1957, and I had just ended a nine-year career as a practicing lawyer—seven and a half of them as an associate in Wall Street's largest law firm, and 17 months as associate counsel to the U.S. Senate's Internal Security Subcommittee—to join NATIONAL REVIEW as its publisher. We were in the second-largest office in the magazine's premises, which were then in a rather dingy building at 211 East 37th Street, just east of Manhattan's Third Avenue.

Bill himself had held the titles of both editor and publisher since the magazine's inception in November 1955, and his decision to give the latter job to me indicated that the double burden was becoming onerous—and, presumably, that he had a fair degree of confidence in me.

He probably had more confidence in my ability to handle the job than I did myself. It wasn't altogether clear to me just what a "publisher" did—particularly when (as was also true in the case of Henry Luce's publications) the editor owned the voting stock. Presumably I would be in charge of the "business side" of the magazine; but Bill had also promised me that I would have the rank of a senior editor, and thus would qualify to attend all major editorial conferences. It certainly sounded interesting, and my enthusiasm for NATIONAL REVIEW (I had been a subscriber from the start) overwhelmed my reservations.

Temperamentally, though, I'll admit that I had a little difficulty adjusting to the atmosphere at NATIONAL REVIEW. I had spent most of my working life (up to that point) in a huge Wall Street law firm. NATIONAL REVIEW probably had fewer than 25 full-time employees, and the general mood of the place was, to put it mildly, a world away from the atmosphere in a Wall Street law office. I felt rather like a German submarine captain who had signed on as first mate on a pleasure yacht.

Bill considered it a bit of a coup that the associate counsel to a Red-hunting Senate committee would be willing to toss up that job to become publisher of his little magazine. (Its paid circulation—the first statistic I mastered—was just under 16,500 at the time.) So, determined to make a splash with the news, he drafted a press release and hurled it broadcast at a startled world.

Amazingly, the *New York Times* reported the event on the first page of its second section. But the story, headline and all, measured about one inch, and it got one crucial detail wrong: NATIONAL REVIEW's new publisher, it advised its readers, would be one "William A. Pusher."

It was on that first day that I met Jim McFadden, whose title was assistant to the publisher and who, therefore, would henceforth assist me. Jim was ready with a proposal for action.

"We might want to try some direct mail," he suggested. I nodded gravely. (But what on earth was *direct mail*? And did its existence imply the existence of something more arcane still, called *indirect* mail?) I kept my mouth shut, and slowly—thanks largely to Jim—learned the ropes.

Sometimes we learned them together. Once Jim managed to make a deal with a publication called *The Southern Agriculturist*, which had a huge circulation among reputedly conservative Southerners. In return for giving that publication a full page in NATIONAL REVIEW in which to promote itself, NATIONAL REVIEW would get a much smaller but still potentially valuable ad in *The Southern Agriculturist*.

The trade was arranged and the ads were run. Jim and I were rather pleased with the one we had inserted in *The Southern Agriculturist*, offering readers a trial subscription to NATIONAL REVIEW. Then somebody pointed out that we had forgotten to mention the price!

WHATEVER THE average publisher did, I soon learned that my job involved, *inter alia*, actually bringing into being any scheme that caught fire in the highly combustible kindling of the Buckley mind.

Once, for example, Bill issued formal invitations to all NATIONAL REVIEW subscribers in the New York metropolitan area to meet the editors over cocktails in the elegant nearby offices of the Buckley family oil business. We were ready for anything up to 25 or thirty people, but at the appointed hour about two hundred thirsty conservatives showed up and I had to make fast arrangements to transfer the whole affair to the larger (but still overburdened) premises of a hotel across the street.

Then there was what came to be known around the office as The Affair of a Couple of Phone Calls. Nikita Khrushchev was to visit New York (the first Soviet Premier to do so—this was 1959), and local conserva- →

Portrait by Jenny Powell

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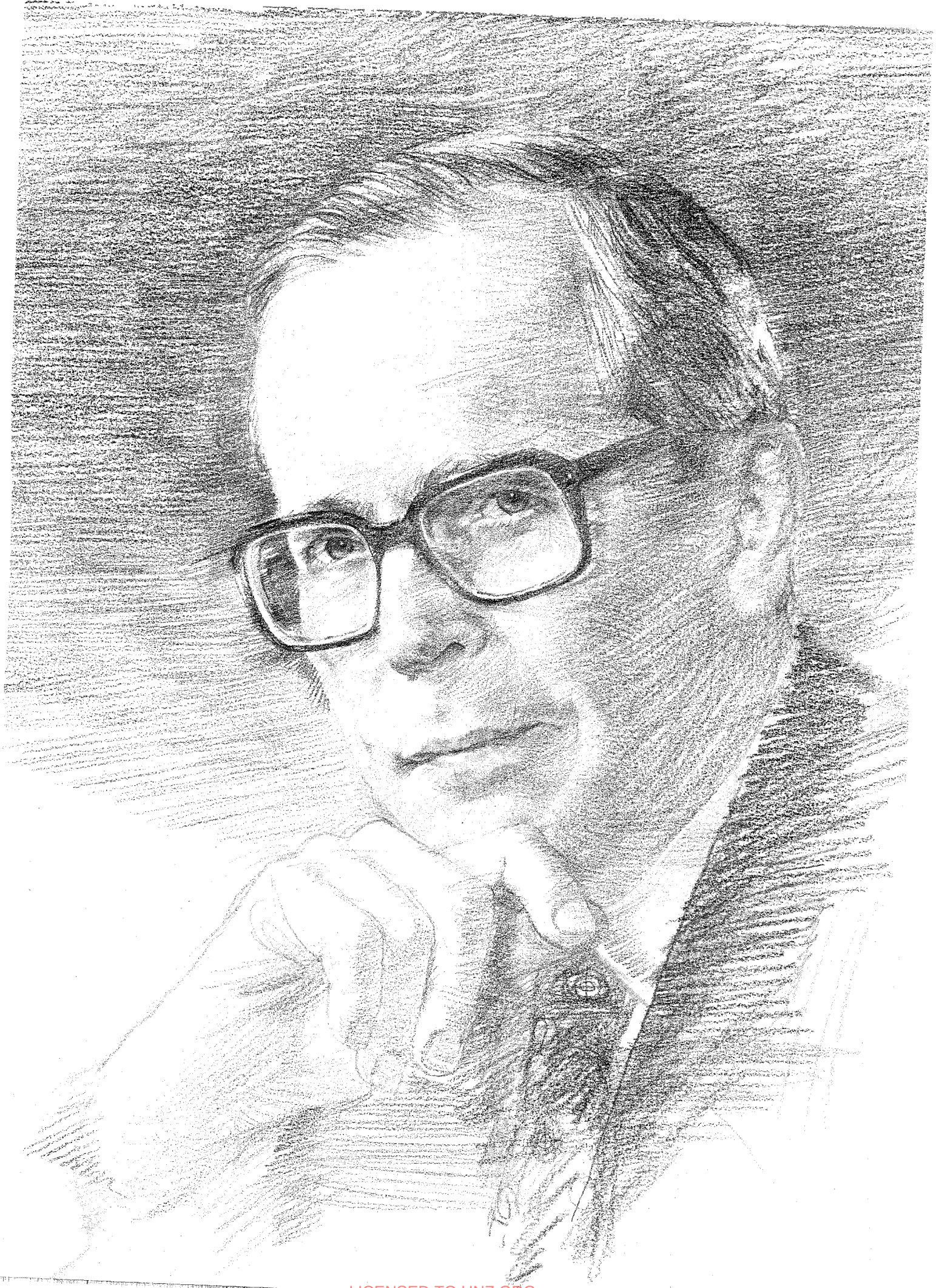

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STONEHENGE AND THE SPACE TELESCOPE

Over 4,10 years ago Neolithic people built a remarkable monument on th Salisbury Plain in what is now southern England. A an engineering feat alone, Stonehenge stands as on of the wonders of the world. But a recent discover has revealed that it served not only as a temple, bu as an astronomical computer.

We know very little about the life of the people wh built Stonehenge. But one thing that has become i creasingly evident is that they were far more sophis cated than was previously believed. Even though the

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worked only with Stone Age technology, they built a monument which apparently acted as an astronomical clock. With Stonehenge they could predict eclipses, the exact days of the solstices, the long-term cycles of the moon and sun, and other important heavenly events. They could begin to understand that the universe had order and how it worked.

The need to understand the workings of the universe is very ancient in man. One might even say that it is instinctual, that it is part of what makes us human.

A leap of forty-one centuries and we find ourselves still confronted with the same questions that drove the prehistoric Britons to build Stonehenge. How does the universe work? How did it begin? Will it ever end?

The Hubble Space Telescope will help us solve these primeval mysteries. Once in Earth orbit, the telescope will be able to detect objects as far as fourteen billion light-years away, which is to see fourteen billion years into the past; past the birth of the Earth; past the birth of our galaxy; to the very beginning of time.

The Space Telescope represents a momentous leap in the history of mankind. The builders of Stonehenge must have felt themselves on the verge of the same kind of moment as they discovered that creation actually had order. Within our own grasp is a view of the creation itself.

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Giving shape to imagination.

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⟶ tives were outraged. Bill hit upon the idea of a mass protest rally in Carnegie Hall, and turned the project over to me (as publisher?). I warned him that arranging such a rally would be a tall order, but Bill dismissed my doubts. All it would require, he declared from the serene depths of ignorance, was "a couple of phone calls."

Three weeks later—Carnegie Hall having been reserved, tickets printed and distributed, a series of speakers lined up, publicity arranged, and the entire junior staff of the magazine torn from their regular jobs and thrown into performing the innumerable tasks and errands that had to be performed—the rally was held.

Piqued at my broad hints that he was good at thinking up work for other people to do, Bill volunteered to arrange personally for the music that I had declared would be necessary. (I had attended plenty of political rallies, and knew that there was nothing like a loud brass band playing "The Stars and Stripes Forever" to set a crowd's pulses pounding.) So on the great day I arrived at Carnegie Hall—and found an organist sensitively playing a Bach fugue as the anti-Khrushchev protestors filed in!

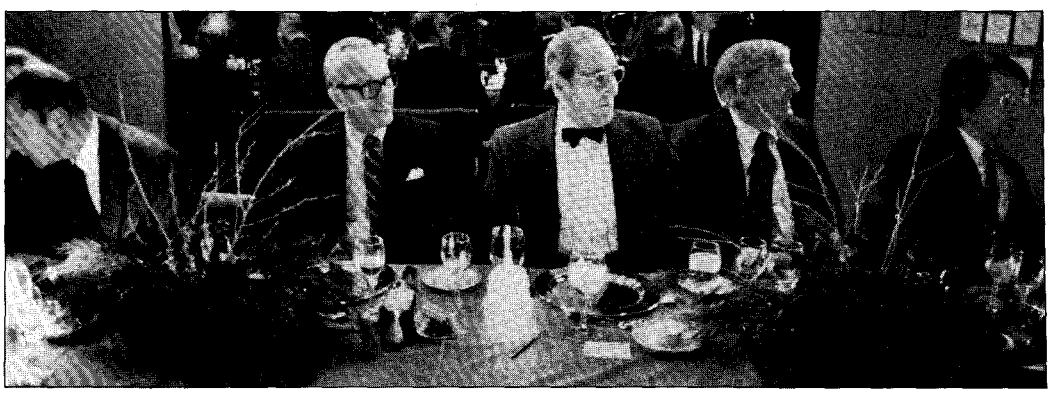
BUT I WOULDN'T want you to believe that the job of publisher of NATIONAL REVIEW was then, or is today, a series of ordeals. On the contrary, I can't imagine a job being more fun. Running my mind back over the decades, I would certainly have to single out, as one of the truly great recurring pleasures of my years at NATIONAL REVIEW, the many times I have dined with Bill and Pat Buckley at their home. Typically the occasion will be one of our "editorial dinners," held on those alternate Mondays when editorials are being written for a new issue. Only senior editors are invited from the magazine, but there will often be one or more outsiders present—fabulously interesting people drawn from Bill's huge and highly eclectic circle of warm friends.

But it isn't the friends, or even the editors, that make these occasions truly memorable: it's the food. Pat Buckley is, among many other things, a genuinely great cook, and she has trained her kitchen staff to realize her highest conceptions. To tuck my feet under the Buckley dinner table is one of my life's greatest satisfactions, and one I hope to experience often in the years ahead when I return (as I frequently shall) to New York on visits.

Careful study of NATIONAL REVIEW's editors over the years has rewarded me with some unexpected insights. One, for example, is their touching dependence on the *New York Times* as a source of news. No magazine condemns the *Times* more roundly for its liberal biases—but none receives more of its information from that rightly suspect source, or is more resistant to information that has not received the *imprimatur* of publication there.

For well over two years, from late 1961 to early 1964, I was privy to the innermost secrets of the burgeoning draft-Goldwater movement, and reported faithfully at our fortnightly editorial conferences on all important developments. Meanwhile the editors of the *Times* and the rest of the major media, any of whom would have given their pensions for such a source if they had taken the whole movement seriously, snoozed peacefully on, serene in the belief that, as James Reston put it, "Rockefeller is in no more danger of losing the [1964] nomination than he is of going broke."

Try as I might, I couldn't persuade NATIONAL REVIEW's editors that the *Times* was simply wrong. They were for



This being NR, *a party was in order, to toast "our fallen comrade." Left to right: John O'Sullivan, Roger Allan Moore, the guest of honor (looking not at all fallen), F. Clifton White, WFB, Wick Allison.*

Sailing up the East River, heading toward 35th Street, on the Empress of New York. *Clockwise: Toni (Mrs. Rob) Sennott, Eleanor Garvey, Jerry Garvey, Ione Whitlock, Dorothy McCartney. Also paying their respects: the Woolworth Building, the Municipal Building.*

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Goldwater, to be sure; but they received my optimistic reports with the sort of well-controlled pleasure displayed by parents whose retarded child has acquitted himself better than expected at school.

It was only when President Johnson, early in 1964, told a press conference that by his count Goldwater was ahead in the delegate contest that the *Times* took a serious look at our draft operation and confirmed his calculations. The next time I walked into an editorial conference, I was welcomed like a rich uncle.

WHAT HAS MADE these three decades at NATIONAL REVIEW doubly gratifying, of course, is the fact that they coincided with, and indeed contributed substantially to, the success of the conservative movement.

One of our early advertising directors sought greener pastures not long after he told an advertising-agency executive that he was soliciting ads for NATIONAL REVIEW and was greeted by the response, "The National Review of what?"

It was a fair question. We were the only opinion journal of a minuscule intellectual movement; and that movement's first ventures into politics were predictably unsuccessful. But slowly the invitations arrived—first to Bill, then to me, then to others on the staff: Would we appear on this radio talk show, or that television program, to explain our curious conservative viewpoint? Later came proposals for a speech (a *paying* speech!), a column, a book. In the fullness of time one of our subscribers was elected Governor of California by a million votes, and four years later Bill's brother (the sainted Jim) became a senator from New York. In 1981 I finally had the experience that never grows routine, when our switchboard operator told me simply, "Mr. Rusher, the President is calling."

At last, like the Marschallin in *Der Rosenkavalier*, I looked in the mirror and said, "What fate decrees must come, and time—how strangely does it go its way." Why do I feel this urge to move on, and leave the magazine that has been so good to me in younger and more vigorous hands? One might as well ask what makes a trumpeter swan leave its Canadian summer haunts for Texas when the first cool breezes of autumn whisper their intimation.

It's an instinct of some sort, that's all—a serene acquiescence in the mysterious economy of nature. I will keep on writing, and speaking, and playing a little politics, of course. But I want to spend part of the time left to me probing some of those deeper questions that will confront mankind in the twenty-first century, as the secular-humanist solutions that have been in vogue ever since the Enlightenment are seen, beyond argument, to have failed.

And I would like, too, to encourage the oncoming generations of youthful conservatives. They are the troops on which all else depends. We must seek them out, teach them everything we can, put their feet on the upward path, and cheer them on their way.

They must dare greatly, building on what has been accomplished but demanding, and achieving, even more. The election campaign just concluded demonstrates all over again how bankrupt liberalism is. Let us demonstrate in our national political life—as NATIONAL REVIEW has demonstrated across the years in the field of journalism—how well conservatives understand the profound imperatives of human nature, the proper design of human society in the light of those imperatives, and the (limited) role of government in the ongoing drama of mankind. □

To Chairman of the Board Roger Moore, Bill Rusher will always be the Dalai Lama of the conservative movement.

Even a Princeton man is pleased to be serenaded by the Whiffenpoofs. On the upper deck, the head table, with (clockwise from front left) Joe Donner, Linda Bridges, John O'Sullivan, Roger Moore, WAR, WFB, Clif White, Wick Allison, Priscilla Buckley, Tom Bolan.

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Much hilarity from (counterclockwise) Pat Buckley, Thomas Farmer, Marietta Tree, Van Galbraith, Pam Donner, and, at next table, Lee Weil, over Priscilla Buckley's account of the never-ending stream of memos from "the Cascade across the Hall." Only Californian Frank O'Connell remains pensive, as the Cascade prepares to move west.

Having the last word: "I would be less than human if I didn't feel a little bit melancholy, and a little bit proud, and above all immensely grateful."

About to finish up with the Whiffenpoof song—in which former Whiffs (and Duke's Men—e.g., Richard Brookhiser) were invited to join. Seated, on lower deck: Pat Buckley, Neil McCaffrey. On upper deck, from left: Mark Cunningham, Rick Brookhiser, Jeanne Safer (Mrs. RB), Judy Coxe, Don Coxe.

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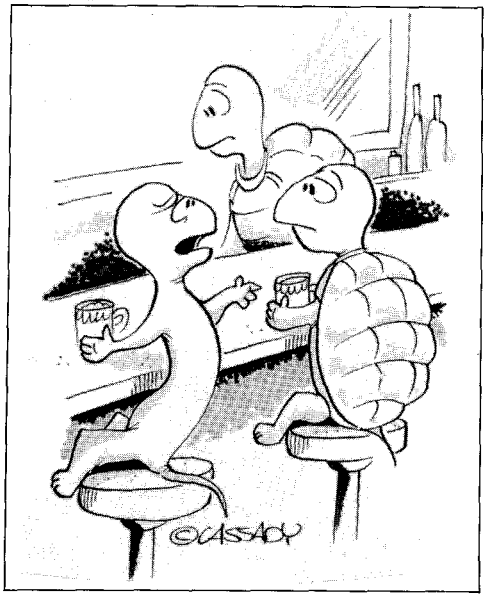
help !!!!

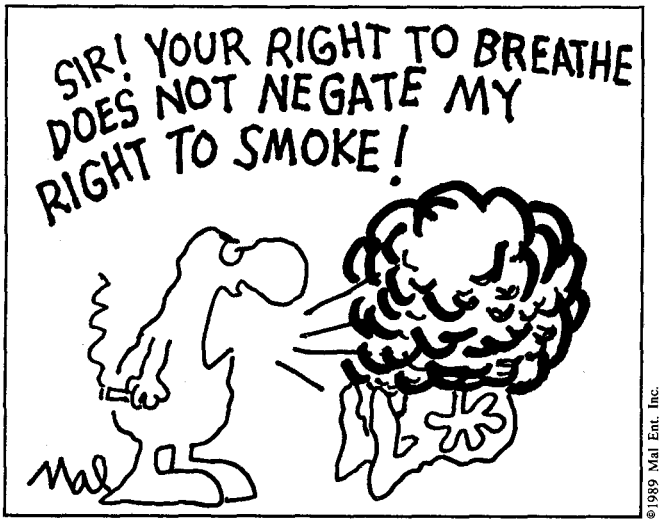


"The judge gave her everything—the kids, the car, even the house!"

Democrats, Transfixed

Like the sacred cows that roam
Through your average Hindu home,
Safe from winding up as steak
Lest the pious bellyache,
Jesse Jackson wends his way
Toward a new election day.

W. H. VON DREELE



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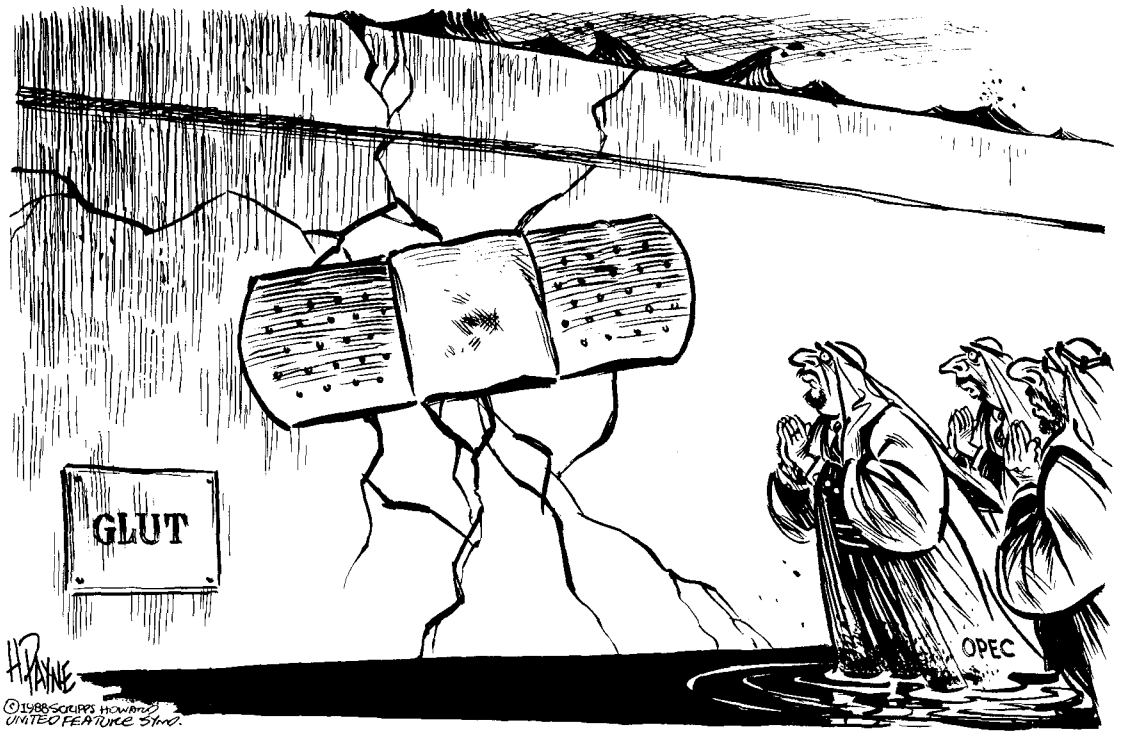

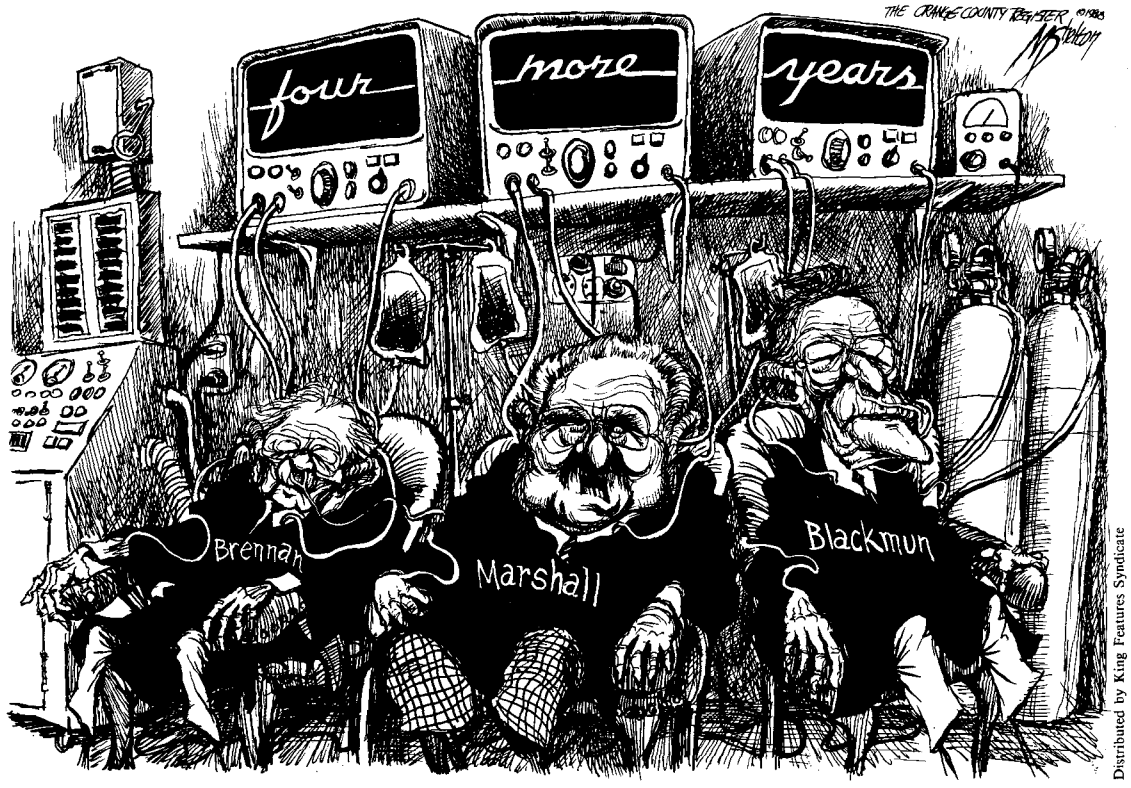

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THE GREAT DEFICIT DEBATE

Pity the National Economic Commission. The magnitude of its task is daunting: to somehow fabricate a consensus on the budget out of a bundle of contradictory theories and statistics. This may be an acceptable method of choosing the color of carpeting at a college dormitory; it cannot separate truth from error.

To broaden and elevate this discussion, NR *invited distinguished representatives of six leading schools of economics to deliver their unvarnished and uncompromised verdicts on the importance of the budget deficit and what to do about it. Surely, major intellectual battles were in store. Yet the reader may be almost as surprised as the editors were by the degree of agreement on major issues (with one notable exception) and by the authors' general resistance to the orthodoxy of the "need" to raise taxes.*

Supply-Sider

EVERYONE KNOWS that the deficit ensured the continuation of inflation in 1981, precluded an economic recovery in 1983, pushed the dollar too high in 1985, and undercut the dollar in 1988. Also, of course, it explains why interest rates were higher under the Reagan Administration than the Carter one. So as soon as Lloyd Bentsen's "hot checks" charge elected the Democratic ticket in 1988, the deficit immediately took center stage.

On the predictive power of the deficit, the anecdotal evidence confirms the academic research. Decades of intensive investigation have succeeded in showing that the deficit doesn't correlate with anything, with the one exception that recessions produce big deficits.

This should not be surprising. In gauging fiscal policy, the most basic factor is the government's control over real resources. This is measured by the spending level. The government takes these resources from the private sector either by taxing or by borrowing. The amount it chooses to take the latter way instead of the former is called the deficit. It is not obvious that taxing is always preferable to borrowing; sound finance certainly contemplates borrowing for capital spending, with the loans paid off over the lifetime of the capital improvement. It is not obvious, then, that the deficit should be zero. Nor is it obvious why the taxing/borrowing choice should be the centerpiece of government policy or public debate.

In taking resources from the private sector, of course, there is no free lunch. More borrowing will, other things being equal, raise interest rates. More taxing will dilute the incentives for the activity being taxed—labor, production, consumption, savings, or whatever. If the spending level is given, the rest of the argument is about tradeoffs. The Reagan economic policies traded more borrowing for less taxing, in particular sharp reductions in the highest marginal rates. Relieving this economic choke-point opened the way for the record economic expansion.

There is some reason to hope, besides, that the Reagan policies may have started to affect the more basic question of the spending level itself. Our national political arrangements make this an extraordinarily difficult task. Spending is controlled by the Congress, a 535-person committee. Congress is an institutional adversary of the Presidency, and in recent years usually a partisan adversary as well. By devices like last-minute continuing resolutions, they have vitiated the President's veto power.

President Reagan's tactic, now being copied by President-elect Bush, was to wage the battle on the revenue side of the budget. The Reagan tax cuts did not starve the public sector; revenues continued to grow with an expanding economy. The tax cuts, though, did cap government income at around 19 per cent of GNP, its historic range. Congress could spend more; at its height spending approached 25 per cent of GNP. But to spend more, Congress had to borrow and pay interest; to spend $10, it had to raise $11.

The howls you hear about the deficit are the congressional reaction to this rather mild discipline, echoed by lobbyists, bureaucrats, Beltway real-estate agents, and other hangers-on. A Census study recently reported that five of the nation's six wealthiest counties adjoin the District of Columbia. But the gravy train has at least showed some sign of slowing. Federal spending as a percentage of GNP has in fact started to decline, perhaps to as low as 22 per cent in 1988, with concomitant shrinkage in the deficit.

What is to be done? Keep up the heat. If Congress wants to raise taxes, let it bring to the table some permanent change in the institutional arrangements to permit

SCARED OF DEMOCRATS? AFRAID OF DEFICITS? HA! NOT AS LONG AS I'M GUARDED BY MY ATTACK DOG, DOLE.
RIGHT, DOLE?...heh, heh...DOLE?...DOLE!
TOM GIBB
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spending control. A gasoline tax for a line-item veto, anyone? But without some new lever on congressional spending, should a President agree to raise taxes to cure the deficit? Hey rube, to win, you only have to catch this greased pig.

—Robert L. Bartley
Editor, The Wall Street Journal

Liberal Keynesian

The deficit is not our "number one economic problem." It may not be a problem at all. It may even be good for us. The fact is that a deficit can be too small as well as too large. You cannot tell which unless you measure it correctly and unless you relate it to the current economic situation.

Federal accounting should throw chills down the spine of any business executive. If large American corporations followed federal rules, many of the most prosperous would have profit-and-loss statements in the red. Simply enough, government, unlike private business, has no separate capital accounts. All expenditures, whether real investment or acquisition of financial assets, contribute to the deficit. If federal accounts followed business practice, they would include depreciation charges instead of investment expenditures—estimated at over $200 billion by the Office of Management and Budget—and knock some $70 billion off the 1988 deficit figure of $155 billion. And that itself was already well down from the $221 billion of just two years earlier.

What is more, deficits have economic significance largely because they add to debt. That means not only that the government owes more, but that the holders of that debt, still overwhelmingly the American public, own more. However, inflation eats away at the real value of this debt. Even the current modest inflation of some 4 per cent yields an "inflation tax," on the $2.3 trillion of federal debt held directly or indirectly by the public, that amounts to another $92 billion. These corrections for investment and inflation thus wipe out the entire official federal deficit. So the first response to the question of what to do about the deficit should be another question: "What deficit?"

If we measured deficits correctly, what could we say about them? The most important thing is that they contribute to more spending. In the first instance, since they mean that the government is giving more to the private sector than it is taking away in taxes, they give people and business greater net income out of which to spend. Another way of looking at this is to recognize that the bigger the government deficit the more the public is adding to its wealth in the form of its holdings of Treasury bills, notes, bonds, and cash. And if the public sees itself as wealthier, it will spend more.

But in our economy, where firms produce not by orders of a commissar but on the basis of what they can sell, more spending means greater production and employment. Simple charts and more rigorous statistical analysis make clear that over the past third of a century, greater real, properly calculated deficits were associated with greater growth in real gross national product and reductions in unemployment. Lesser deficits, or surpluses, were associated with lesser real GNP growth or actual decline, and with increases in unemployment.

This historical verdict has now been dramatically confirmed. Our really huge recent deficits were a major factor in the sustained recovery from deep recession, a recovery that has seen the official unemployment rate cut in half in six years.

Deficits can be too large if they cause spending to rise faster than our capacity to produce. They then contribute to inflation. They can also be too large if they somehow reduce investment, in this way, and in this way only, putting a burden on the future.

But with all the recovery of the past six years, unemployment is still some 2 percentage points above the 3.4 per cent rate of two decades ago. There is no reason we cannot do that well again. There are resources to produce more. There is room for more growth without inflation. It is an unfortunate set of values that would now argue for deficit reduction to "cool the economy," thus generating more unemployment, because of the *possibility* that there might otherwise be more inflation.

As for investment, greater deficits have in fact been associated with more, not less, private investment—and for good reason. Increases in spending and output generated increased need for more productive capital, and the profits to finance it. Reductions in consumer spending are more likely to reduce than increase private investment.

But most critical to our future is the vast amount of public investment in infrastructure, to maintain and improve our roads, bridges, and airports, and in our resources of land, air, and water, and in research and in the health and education of our people. The real burden we are in danger of bequeathing to our future is a generation of illiterate school dropouts and countless more falling behind in the skills necessary to cope in a technologically advanced world. Deficit reduction that curbs our investment in human capital is the greatest folly of all.

What we can and should do now is ease our monetary constraints. A more liberal Federal Reserve policy would allow interest rates and the dollar to fall, thus stimulating domestic investment and exports and reducing our dependence on foreign investment. There would be a direct effect in reducing the deficit as each percentage-point drop in interest rates would reduce Treasury interest payments by some $20 billion. The more prosperous economy would reduce the deficit further.

And then we could tackle our real deficit in investing in our children, our grandchildren, and ourselves.

—Robert Eisner
William R. Kenan Professor of Economics at Northwestern University; 1988 President, American Economic Association

Monetarist

There is no "monetarist position" on the budget deficit. Monetarism is mainly about the effects of money on inflation. Deficits have an effect on inflation—defined as the *maintained* rate of price change—only if they are financed by issuing money. Argentina, Bolivia, and Brazil are recent examples of inflations financed by money issued to pay for government spending.

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In these or other countries with budget deficits equal to 15 per cent of GNP or more, people observe that the government is unwilling to raise taxes or reduce spending; they expect inflation, so they resist holding domestic money. There is a flight from money, rapid money growth, and rising inflation.

Some economists argue that deficits must sooner or later increase money growth and produce inflation. Experience in most developed countries does not support this claim. An example is Italy, which has managed in this decade to reduce inflation from 15 or 20 per cent a year to 5 per cent or less while budget deficits have remained at 10 per cent of GNP or more. At the Italian share of GNP, the U.S. budget deficit would exceed $500 billion, more than three times its present size. And while Italy is an extreme example, it is not a unique example of a country with a persistent budget deficit and a declining rate of inflation. Our own country and Japan are other examples. Inflation here has fallen from 10 per cent to about 4 per cent despite the budget deficits of the 1980s. Inflation in Japan was reduced to about zero while the government budget deficits remained equal to 3 per cent of GNP or more.

The lesson to be learned is that a country with a deficit can avoid inflation by borrowing to finance the deficit while slowing money growth. Should we, however, be concerned that, as in Mexico, Brazil, or Argentina, continued borrowing will pile up debts that we will have difficulty servicing? Will foreigners refuse to lend, forcing a rise in interest rates and an economic day of reckoning? Adam Smith warned that there is much ruin in a nation. Is it all about to come due?

Continuing clamor about the deficit obscures what should be the central issue. Borrowing, hence the budget deficit, is useful if we use the borrowed resources productively. If the return on our investments, or the value we place on consumption, exceeds what we pay on the debt, we are made better off by borrowing to finance expenditures. Because our borrowing is in dollars and the dollar is not rigidly pegged, we do not face problems arising from a mismanaged foreign-exchange system as Brazil, Argentina, Mexico, and other large debtors do.

Some argue that the problem is that, as a nation, we are consuming, not investing. Hence, we must pay future income for what is usually described as a consumption binge. We should not accept this argument at face value. There is reason to be suspicious of the published data and to question the accuracy of the reported measures of net investment. A larger issue is whether we should accept the argument at all. Consumption is not evil. There is no reason to see calamity if people willingly choose to consume more today and repay tomorrow. Indeed, most of us do just that when we buy a house and take out a mortgage. As a society, however, we should be concerned about biases in the tax system, in laws, in regulations, and in government spending that tilt total spending toward consumption and against investment. If there are such biases, we should correct them in the interests of efficiency. The gain from increased efficiency is worth having whether the budget is in deficit or surplus.

There probably is a bias against investment. Government can reduce the bias. The largest part of government spending consists of consumption spending and transfer payments that mainly finance private consumption spending. Government can reduce this spending. Tax changes in the 1986 act ended inefficient special preferences but shifted taxes from households to corporations. A larger part of current taxes is now borne by owners of capital. This discourages investment and favors consumption. Government can shift taxes from investment to consumption by substituting a broad-based consumption tax for the personal and corporate income taxes.

The fact that there are many different, strongly held professional views about the effects of the budget deficit should tell us that convincing evidence of major effects is lacking for the United States. The deficit can be the source of a problem if it is financed by inflation, if it rises continuously relative to income, if it absorbs saving into wasteful spending. Currently, the major problem is that excessive concern about the deficit will convince the public that we must have higher taxes. Closing the deficit by tax increases does not improve the use of resources and may make it worse by encouraging more government spending for consumption.

Much of the postwar fiscal history of the Federal Government can be written in three sentences: Taxes have remained below 20 per cent of GNP. Government spending has increased persistently as a share of GNP. Large reported budget deficits are the result.

The problem is to change the incentives that have produced these results. Raising tax rates is neither the best nor the only way. A constitutional limitation on spending would restrict government's use of resources to a maximum share of GNP in peacetime. If we are willing to pay no more than 20 per cent in taxes, a 20 per cent share for government spending, including transfers, would avoid persistent deficits.

—Allan H. Meltzer
John M. Olin Professor of Political Economy and Public Policy at Carnegie-Mellon University

Conservative Keynesian

American economic performance has not been adversely affected by the large budget deficits of the 1980s. Real per-capita income grew annually at 2.1 per cent between 1980 and mid 1988, versus 1.74 per cent during the 1970s, when deficits as a share of GNP were about half the average level for the 1980s.

These simple statistics do not "prove" that a higher deficit relative to GNP was responsible for the higher growth rate of the economy. They do, however, require those who claim that large deficits result in worse economic performance to explain why per-capita real income grew 20 per cent faster during the 1980–88 period, when deficits as a share of GNP nearly doubled.

Stronger economic performance during the 1980s, when American deficits were unusually large by historical standards, may be due to the fact that our deficits were not unusually large by international standards. Nor has our national debt been unusually large relative to GNP by either historical or international standards.

The American deficit-to-GNP ratio peaked at 6.3 per cent in 1983. Canada and Japan experienced similar ratios during the 1980s. The American debt-to-GNP ratio rose

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sharply from about 26 per cent in 1980 to a peak of 43 per cent in 1987. It is now headed down. A ratio of national debt to GNP in the 40 to 50 per cent range is typical for industrial countries and in fact is considerably below the ratios of Canada, Italy, and Japan.

These average figures do mask a time during the mid 1980s when American budget deficits were in what most economists considered a danger zone. Projections forward from 1983-85 showed continued deficit escalation and a sharp rise in the debt-to-GNP ratio. There was at that time a possibility, although a remote one, that American deficits would get so large and debt would rise so much faster than GNP that the interest on the debt could, Third World style, eventually come to consume most of government revenues.

However, in the fall of 1985 Congress passed the draconian Gramm-Rudman-Hollings deficit-reduction bill. Crude as it was, it worked. In the ten years before 1985, federal spending rose at an average of 11 per cent a year. Between 1985 and 1988 the growth of federal spending was cut to 4 per cent a year.

As a result of the slower growth of federal spending and some payroll and corporate tax increases, our deficit has come down to about 3 per cent of GNP. Gradually, over the next four years, even if nothing additional is done, the deficit will fall below 2 per cent of GNP, well below the average figure of 2.4 per cent for 1973-1980. At the same time the debt-to-GNP ratio will fall to about 40 per cent because the total output of the economy will be rising faster than the national debt.

The deficit can be *eliminated*, if that is what we want, by holding the growth of spending to 4 per cent a year between now and 1993. This will eliminate the deficit with no new taxes. Since spending growth is currently scheduled to average more than 5 per cent between now and 1993, some additional cuts will be needed.

Tax increases do not seem appropriate unless Americans want a much larger Federal Government. Revenues will average about 19.3 per cent of GNP over the next four years, some three-quarters of a per cent or about $40 billion a year higher than the postwar average.

The politics and arithmetic surrounding the federal budget suggest a pattern for spending cuts. The growth of entitlements (the largest category of federal spending, including Social Security, Medicare, and civilian and military retirement) could be cut to two-thirds of the normal full inflation adjustment. That would yield 1989-93 savings of $81.6 billion ($30 billion in 1993 alone). But to succeed politically that approach would require more new taxes to get Congress to go along, and the new taxes would very probably be spent by Congress.

The fact that entitlements (including Social Security) and interest on the debt together total more than 60 per cent of federal spending means that if they are not to be cut, their share of total spending will rise at about 5 per cent per year. If a "real freeze" is applied to defense spending so that defense outlays just keep up with inflation, about one-quarter of spending will have to rise at 4 per cent per year. Arithmetically, the rest of outlays (non-defense discretionary spending) will have to be frozen in dollar terms in order to meet the 4 per cent growth target.

The fact that a modest reduction in the growth of federal spending can balance the budget in four years' time is testimony to the fact that much of the necessary cutting has already been done. That is why the economy has continued to perform reasonably well.

If the President and Congress can repeat the performance of the past three years by holding the growth of spending to 4 per cent a year, the budget can be balanced by 1993. If the economy underperforms or if we have a recession we shall have to wait longer, since holding rigidly to a deficit-reduction path would only exacerbate any economic slowdown.

The budget deficit and what we do about it is not so much an economic issue as it is a political choice about the scope of government. If we want to hold the Federal Government's share of national income to about 20 per cent, the average of the postwar period, we must slow spending growth to 4 per cent for the next few years. If, instead, we raise taxes, the Federal Government's share will reach 25 per cent very quickly and we shall as individuals lose control over an additional 5 per cent of our resources.

—JOHN H. MAKIN

Director of Fiscal Policy Studies, American Enterprise Institute

Rational-Expectationist

IN RECENT YEARS the U.S. budget deficit has been the dominant popular economic crisis. The supposed harmful effects of these deficits include high real interest rates, low saving, low rates of economic growth, a large current-account deficit, and either a high or a low dollar (depending in some mysterious way on the time period). This crisis scenario has been hard to maintain, given the robust performance of the U.S. economy since late 1982. This performance features high rates of economic growth, declining unemployment, high values of real investment spending, much lower inflation, a sharp decrease in nominal interest rates, a decline in real interest rates since 1984, and a dramatic boom in the stock market until October 1987.

Standard macroeconomic theories predict that budget deficits will crowd out private investment. But, using a broad measure of gross investment that includes purchases of consumer durables, the ratio of real investment expenditure to real GNP averaged 28 per cent from 1984 to 1987—a post-World War II high. While less dramatic, even narrower concepts of real gross investment showed a strong performance in recent years.

The standard theory says that budget deficits depress national saving. But the best measure that we have of this saving—the change in the real net worth of households—has been fairly high, even with allowance for the stock-market crash. From 1984 to 1987, the ratio of the change in households' real net worth to real GNP (a measure of the national saving rate) averaged more than 11 per cent.

Conventional measures of national saving look low in recent years because they fail to consider the valuation of assets, especially business capital as valued by the stock market and residential real estate as valued by the housing market. Instead of using market-based evaluations of assets, the national-accounts concepts of national saving and net investment rely on essentially arbitrary estimates of depre-

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ciation. In recent years, these measures of depreciation have indicated large reductions in the value of capital, just when the markets have signaled the opposite. How can it be that we are providing little for the future by "saving virtually nothing" (as asserted recently by a member of the National Economic Commission), and yet our real national wealth has grown rapidly over time? I submit that the picture of low saving is based on inappropriate concepts of saving, and is simply an inaccurate description of the U.S. economy.

The recent combination of strong investment spending and moderate national saving (appropriately defined) meant that the United States had to rely on foreigners to finance a portion of domestic investment. The reflection of this financing is the current-account deficit. This other deficit is also not cause for concern, especially since the ability to borrow abroad helped to sustain the U.S. investment boom of recent years. In fact, the main legitimate fear about current-account deficits is that government policymakers will take "corrective action."

There is an economic theory that accords better than standard views with the recent U.S. data, as well as with the evidence from other time periods and countries. Economists associate this theory with David Ricardo, the great British economist of the early nineteenth century.

The central point of the Ricardian theory—also stressed frequently by Milton Friedman—is that the cost of government depends on the resources that it uses. Because there is no free lunch, government expenditures have to be paid for by taxes today or taxes tomorrow, but not by taxes never. By running budget deficits or surpluses, the governments can rearrange the time pattern of taxes, but—given that it is impossible to surprise people systematically by defaulting—it cannot alter the total of taxes that it has to collect. (The term "total" applies here in a present-value sense—that is, after adjustment for interest paid or received depending on when expenditures or taxes arise.) Since households care mostly about this total of taxes, and only secondarily about the timing of the tax payments, budget deficits have little effect on households' decisions. In particular, as long as people maintain their beliefs about the prospective levels of government spending, budget deficits do not have major effects on macroeconomic variables, such as consumption and investment, interest rates, and national saving. This result about budget deficits not mattering much fits the facts better than the standard theory that I referred to before.

While U.S. budget deficits do not have the major consequences that are usually suggested, it does not follow that these deficits and the associated quantity of public debt are irrelevant. Budget deficits affect the timing of taxes—say, income taxes—and it is desirable for these levies to behave smoothly, rather than varying erratically from one period to the next. This tax-smoothing argument justifies the long-established practice of running large budget deficits during recessions and wars. From this perspective it is surprising, and possibly a minor mistake, that U.S. budget deficits were so large during the peacetime boom since 1984. But to the extent that the large deficits were an error, it is also true that much of this error has already been eliminated. When expressed in relation to real GNP, the real federal deficit has declined from 4.4 per cent in 1985 to 2.2 per cent in 1987 and to less than 2 per cent in 1988. (I measured the deficit by the change in privately held federal debt, and I adjusted interest payments for inflation.) The amazing thing is that the amount of ink devoted to budget deficits has not declined in a parallel fashion.

The likely reason that the debate about the budget deficit is so intense and enduring is that the real controversy is about the size of the Federal Government. The most important question is not whether the deficit will be reduced, but whether this reduction will involve increases in taxes or cuts in expenditures. Those who argue that taxes must rise (and are dutifully applauded by most of the media as being realistic and courageous) are really saying that they want a larger Federal Government. Those who rule out tax increases are seeking to maintain or decrease the scope of government. At least for people who like smaller government, it is these latter politicians who are candidates for heroism. In any event, unlike the budget deficit, the size of government is an important question, which does deserve a lot of ink. Perhaps it would be better if the debate were couched in these terms, rather than in terms of who is or is not realistic or courageous, and who is or is not a fiscal conservative.

—Robert J. Barro

Professor of Economics, Harvard University

Doomsayer

Most Americans, I am told, are not worried by their government's budget deficit. But we Europeans and the Japanese are. That's because we are effectively financing it. If the U.S. federal budget deficit were financed out of private American savings, it would be of parochial interest only. But instead, a tax-shy Administration and profligate Congress govern a spendthrift people, so that every year the U.S. as a whole lives beyond its means. Our savings foot this bill and we would like to get our money back with a fair rate of return. But if America continues its present rake's progress, we certainly won't.

We have reason to be concerned. Financing the U.S. deficit places a great strain on the international financial system. Each year private investors in the rest of the world must be found who are willing and able to add yet more billions of dollars to their bloated holdings of America's fast-depreciating currency. Christianity, I believe, survived because the Romans ran out of hungry lions. Japan and Europe will likewise run out of hungry dollar lenders, if they are fed an unchanging diet of U.S. deficits. Then nasty things will happen to the world as a whole.

America cannot live beyond its means forever. Sooner or later the government must borrow less or the American people must save more. At present neither seems inclined to do so. The latest indicators suggest the U.S. economy is booming again. The consumer is still spending. Corporate America is still on the razzle, piling new debt on old as it buys itself out with junk bonds. There is no sign now that George Bush will be rescued by higher private savings from the need to cut the federal budget deficit. But he seems most unlikely to do so. So long as neglecting the budget deficit hurts less than correcting it, the Reaganite policy of economic management through wishful thinking will continue. Only the need to escape a more painful dis-

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aster will force the Administration and Congress to agree upon effective measures to reduce the budget deficit.

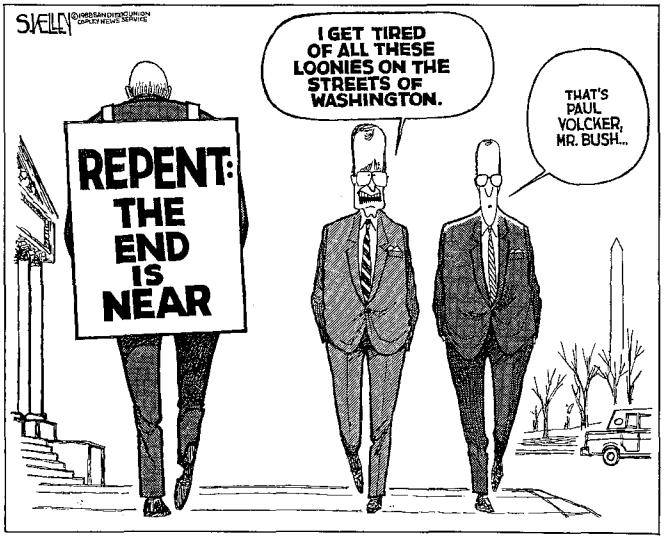
There is no shortage of disasters waiting to happen. Internationally the LDC [Less-Developed Country] debt problem remains unresolved. Within the U.S. there are thousands of dodgy debtors certain to default if interest rates go higher or the economy slides into recession. Individuals who are up to their ears in debt would not be the main offenders. They would simply stop borrowing and spending. But that would make matters worse for companies and banks. Many of the recent highly leveraged buy-outs would come unstuck. America's Savings & Loan industry is already bust.

These disasters, however, will probably be avoided. They are so threatening that they will inhibit the Federal Reserve Board from raising interest rates high enough to choke off domestic demand. Deliberately engineered monetary stringency is no more a realistic prospect than voluntary action to curb the budget deficit. So disaster, when it strikes, will be through the financial markets.

Here is how it will happen. Domestic demand will continue to boom. The trade deficit will widen again. Private investors will lose confidence in America and stop lending. The dollar will come under sustained attack. The Bush Administration may be willing to let it fall. But a falling dollar will not close the trade gap unless Americans consume less. Instead, it will cause inflation to accelerate.

European and Japanese central bankers may rush to the dollar's rescue, repeating the mistake they made in 1987 following the Louvre Accord. But exchange-market intervention would simply give our economies an inflationary monetary push. We have a low pain threshold for rising inflation and will react promptly to contain it. The buck, as in October 1987, will then be passed back to the United States.

If the American Government does not then flinch from faster inflation, financial markets soon will. Inflation solves debt problems by defrauding creditors. Investors have learned this the hard way. They will strike for higher real returns. First bond prices will tumble, then Wall Street will crash. This is the one disaster the U.S. Government can't prevent. It is therefore the one that must finally force it to act. Where the crash of '87 failed, the crash of '89 may succeed, at the cost of causing a world recession.



What a pity most Americans don't see this trouble coming. If they could, voluntary budget cuts would forestall it.

—Brian Reading
London partner, HME International Advisory Associates, Inc., New York

Summing Up

At the depth of the 1982 recession, seemingly sane people were actually screaming that we needed a *big* tax increase to stop the slump—just as in 1932. I then went around asking, "Where are the Keynesians when you really need them?" Well, in this symposium not only the Keynesians but just about everyone else defended the pass against tax hikes.

Robert Eisner reasons that insofar as there have lately been more *real* government debts after inflation is taken into account, there have also been more real government assets. In that sense, the deficit may be a statistical illusion. Illusion or not, Robert Bartley sees it as the only restraint on congressional spending we have. John Makin points out that simply keeping federal spending growing at the same pace as the past three years could balance the budget by the end of George Bush's first term. Allan Meltzer remarks that "the major problem is that excessive concern about the deficit will convince the public that we must have higher taxes." And Robert Barro concludes that the most important difference between deficits and taxes is that the taxes are sure to be *permanent*—and so the real debate is about the size of government.

This collective analysis was unwittingly confirmed by Kenneth Arrow of Stanford, who explained the case for ever-increasing taxes in the *New York Times* (Oct. 16). "Without raising taxes," said Arrow, "you have to make decisions about which programs are more important than others . . ." Indeed. But is that really too much to ask?

Brian Reading is the odd man out in this survey. He is a twin-deficit man and no mistake. He blames the October 1987 stock-market crash primarily on the U.S. budget deficit. Yet if Mr. Reading is isolated in our academic symposium, he represents a considerable body of opinion among international bankers, Wall Street, and the media. An explanation of this division of opinion was furnished long ago by Keynes: "Practical men, who believe themselves to be quite exempt from any intellectual influences, are usually the slaves of some defunct economist." The "practical men" of Wall Street and CBS reflect the defunct economic view of a decade ago; academic opinion has observed and drawn lessons from the remarkable economic experiences of the last eight years.

Montagu Norman, Keynes's celebrated critic, famously remarked: "The dogs may bark but the caravan moves on." What he did not take into account was that when the caravan of economic scholarship had moved on, the dogs would continue emitting their favorite barks regardless. They are barking today *on* and *to* the National Economic Commission. Our symposium confronts the Commission with a painful dilemma: either plagiarize liberally or slip unobtrusively into one of those footnotes of economic history reserved for the peddlers of conventional unwisdom.

—Alan Reynolds

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AYN RAND REVIVED

MUSSOLINI SHRUGGED

JOSEPH SOBRAN

AYN RAND'S first novel, *We the Living*, was published in 1936. It holds up well after fifty years, thanks to a gripping plot and a property in which it's almost unique: social realism about the Soviet Union.

It was also filmed, in 1942, but without Miss Rand's consent or knowledge. The Fascist government of Italy sponsored a production that ironically violated her property rights, thereby indicating a certain deafness to her message.

Nevertheless, when Miss Rand saw the film after the war, she was pleased. It's generally faithful to her book, and the casting is superior to that of the Hollywood version of *The Fountainhead*, which starred Gary Cooper and was made with her close cooperation.

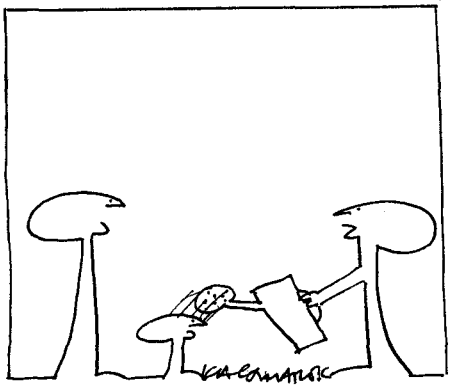
The postwar settlement gave her the rights to the movie of *We the Living*, and her estate has now released it for general circulation. In Italy it was shown in two parts (and was a hit); here, it has been edited to a single three-hour film, with English subtitles.

The plot is simple. In the early Twenties, in Petrograd, a girl named Kira falls in love with a young man named Leo, son of an executed aristocrat. Because of his "class origins," Leo is denied medical care when he contracts tuberculosis. In order to save him, Kira becomes the mistress of a powerful but essentially decent Communist Party official, Andrei. When Leo recovers, Kira has to prevent her two lovers from finding out about each other.

Inevitably, they do find out. Andrei searches Leo's apartment in connection with a black-market investigation, and there discovers Kira's dresses. Leo is arrested and faces the death penalty. But with Leo apparently lost, Kira furiously tells Andrei the whole truth: she was only his whore, and she did it all for Leo. She defies him to do his worst. But Andrei is shattered at the realization of what he has done, and of what Communism is. He contrives to save Leo's life, then shoots himself. Leo, however, cynically spurns Kira and chooses instead the life of a prosperous gigolo. Here the film ends; in the book, Kira is killed while trying to flee to the free world.

The dénouement reveals Andrei as the nobler of the two men: unlike Leo, he prefers death to dishonor. He serves Communism only as long as he can believe in it. Except in his love for Kira, he serves it incorruptibly. Leo, on the other hand, is willing to compromise himself. When Andrei sees the truth, he sacrifices himself for Kira as she has sacrificed herself for Leo. But Leo is as incapable of such love as he is of understanding what Kira has done for him, and she never tries to explain her actions to him: rather mysteriously, she simply allows him to think the worst about her and to sink further into cynicism. Is she sparing him the torment of full knowledge? Or is it futile to try to keep his love, and pointless to justify herself? Or is this perhaps simply one of those old-fashioned stories in which characters don't discuss their own motives too much?

Be that as it may, Kira loves Leo, not the more deserving Andrei. When it comes to winning maidens' affections, the smart money is still on reckless virility rather than moral rectitude, and reckless virility happens to be Leo's long suit. He tells off Soviet officials (including Andrei) with a courage that frightens Kira for him, even as it makes her admire him all the more. Andrei has his own courage, as his final Sydney Carton gesture shows, but as a GPU officer he's hardly in a position to display it: in executing his duties he simply appears ruthless.



"The child has talent—it should be cultivated."

THE BOOK'S POWER lies in its depiction of the grim, grimy terror that prevailed even in the supposed golden age of Lenin. Everyone is reduced to a debasing dependence on the state, less because of the fear of arbitrary arrest than because of the total absence of property rights and economic freedom. You can be suddenly deprived of anything—job, possessions, living quarters—that is coveted by some Party hack. The characters are driven to toadying, corruption, prostitution, and treachery by the system that promised them "liberation."

We the Living makes the issue of property rights vivid and vital as no other fiction does, as far as I know. It also shows the formation of a malign status system in a society in which everything is up for grabs, where connections are everything and talent is next to nothing. Miss Rand does for Lenin's Soviet Union something like what *Bonfire of the Vanities* does for New York—again ironically, because she'd have had only scorn for Tom Wolfe's notion that status information is the stuff of the novel.

In the movie, Communism appears as tyrannical, but not in the fabric of the economy: a Fascist-sponsored film would not tend to stress the dangers of central control as such. Randians like to say that the Italian public flocked to the film because they perceived its relevance to Fascism itself, but it's more likely that they simply enjoyed the Puccinian story.

And the stars. Fosco Giachetti plays

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Andrei with careworn dignity; Rossano Brazzi, as Leo, looks younger and handsomer than I'd ever realized he'd been, and he shades the part nicely from dashing lover to bitter roué. But best of all is Alida Valli as Kira. I've always wondered why Valli never became a big star here; she's best known as Orson Welles's mistress in *The Third Man*, where she seemed to embody the devastated soul of postwar Europe. She was only 21 when she played Kira, subtle expressions rippling over her lovely face as elusively as the waves on a wind-ruffled pond. (In her fifties, her autumnal beauty was on display in Bertolucci's *The Spider's Stratagem*. That's the first and last I've seen of her since she stalked past desolate Joseph Cotten in the final frame of *The Third Man*.)

Otherwise, the black-and-white production looks pretty tacky now, with Italian confetti badly miscast as Leningrad snow. The movie inevitably loses the social detail of the novel, and would have done so even if the Fascists had cared to stress the pettiness of Party oligarchy. But the story still moves, and the actors improve on the book: Miss Rand's characters, on the page, often seem to be played by mediocre thespians who can't resist making their lines pat and their gestures extravagant. This tendency got worse in her two big novels, *The Fountainhead* and *Atlas Shrugged*, where every speech seems to hammer home Objectivist doctrine. The doctrine was still embryonic, fortunately, in *We the Living*, and in the movie the characters seem to speak for themselves rather than on Miss Rand's behalf.

What's more, they develop. Life changes them. Howard Roark and John Galt are demigods, self-created, without ancestors or blood ties. They can no more have children than parents. When they fall in love, it's the instantaneous mutual recognition of a breed apart. (Roark rapes Dominique Francon, having quickly read her mind. Luckily, his reading is accurate.) Love neither follows nor is followed by growing intimacy: being perfect and autonomous, the Randian hero may desire, but never need, another. Randian desire is never merely randy. But this is the man of Miss Rand's later immaturity. Kira has needs, and parents. And she has what John Galt lacks: life.

But even Kira's parents are ineffectual. They have no wisdom to impart. She has no debt to them. From early childhood she has rejected their religion, and they've long since given up taking her to church; it doesn't even seem to matter to them. Their speeches expose them as small, deluded people.

When Miss Rand includes parents in her picture at all, she shows them as they look to unhappy adolescents: kind but potentially tyrannical, and—above all—uncomprehending. Kira's parents understanding nothing: neither the nature of the Soviet state (they think it will pass quickly) nor her own desire to be independent (they disapprove of her living with Leo out of wedlock).

Miss Rand's appeal has always been to young people, people of Kira's age, for whom "society" is just parents writ large, and in whom the desire to *be* parents is still unborn. Individualism and collectivism are the only options; no network of affection and obligation has reality.

Born Jewish in Leningrad when it was still St. Petersburg, Miss Rand was able to escape to America thanks to her relations in Chicago, whose name, by the way, was Portnoy. This pivotal fact made no impression on her outlook. She never wrote about her Jewishness (her original name was Rosenbaum) and seems to have attached no significance to it. All her heroes and heroines are Nordic, verging on Viking.

But just as some Christians could only see Communism as "Jewish Bolshevism," Miss Rand seems to have thought of Communism as the logical extension of Christianity, for which her euphemisms were "mysticism" and "altruism." An atheist herself, she made no connection between Communism and atheism and never expressed sympathy for Communism's Christian victims. "Religion," she wrote in her private notebook in 1934, "is the first enemy of the ability to think. . . . *Faith is the worst curse of mankind.*" She audaciously opposed the dollar sign to the Cross, exalting "the virtue of selfishness."

Like Christian socialists, though from the other side, she confused the counsel "Give all you have to the poor" with the somewhat distinct command "Give all your neighbor has to the poor." But renunciation and expropriation are, after all, two different things.

And the villains of *We the Living* are selfish people, whereas Kira engages our sympathy because she loves another so much that she commits a monstrously unselfish act. True, the concept of selfishness underwent a drastic high redefinition in Miss Rand's hands, but it's still stretching a point to call Kira *more* selfish, in any sense, than the grubby little Party worms she has to contend with. She may have more genuine self-respect, but we didn't need Ayn Rand to point this out to us.

In her biography *The Passion of Ayn Rand*, Barbara Branden, who was well situated to know, recounts how Miss Rand's own selfishness destroyed two marriages. Nor did she gracefully release her lover—Mrs. Branden's husband—when his fancies took a different turn: she insisted that he owed her everything, and she would destroy him for rejecting her. ("I don't even care what it does to *me*!" she roared, throwing rational self-interest to the winds.) She could be amazingly bullying toward her young disciples, demanding of them humiliating self-abasement. Even her eccentric aesthetic tastes became Objectivist credenda: Rachmaninoff was superior to Beethoven, Mickey Spillane to Shakespeare. And while obeying the strange swerves of her party line, her followers would parrot her denunciations of "second-handers"—people whose opinions were merely derivative (unlike those of us rational beings). After her break with Nathaniel Branden, you couldn't even sign up for the Objectivist lectures without a written promise that you would never buy any of his books.

Such was the fate of the man she had once called a "genius," a "hero," and "my intellectual heir." He's in California now, still making a living.

Even so, I think Ayn Rand is a much better novelist than, say, Mickey Spillane. And she does force you to think straight: not a contemptible virtue, in this world. She wrote *We the Living* before she had set up shop as the Oracle of Reason, while she was still human. Read it, if you haven't already. And see the movie, if you think Valli is even half as bewitching as I do. □

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ATWATER TO THE RESCUE

"I KNOW YOU'RE not interested in a government job," said George Bush on Election Day to his fellow jogger, "but you and the RNC thing would go well together. How do you feel about heading it up?"

"I'm honored, sir," responded Lee Atwater, the 37-year-old former aide to Senator Strom Thurmond.

George Bush's ship of state, it is widely predicted in Washington, will sail or sink depending on how well it deals with a Congress thirsting for vengeance after the hardball 1988 election campaign. With Democrats controlling majorities in both the Senate and the House, Bush's lever for passing legislation will be public opinion. Since Administration officials are prohibited from directly encouraging the public to put pressure on Congress, the task of guiding that lever will fall almost entirely to the Republican National Committee. That means Atwater.

As distinct from many other Presidents, Bush will locate his political center of gravity at the RNC. Liaison with the White House will be personally set and maintained by Atwater, who has selected his Ohio-bred friend Jim Wray for the Political Director's post. (Wray was National Field Director for Bush in 1988 and former RNC Mid-Atlantic Regional Director.)

Eight years ago Lee Atwater worked with Lyn Nofziger in the White House office for political affairs. A field director for the Reagan-Bush campaign and the principal architect of Reagan's razor-thin 1980 victory in a number of Southern states (including his native South Carolina), Atwater sensed early that he was riding a tidal wave in American politics: the coming power of his own baby-boom generation, and the coming Republican dominance of his native region. Among Atwater's responsibilities, as Deputy Assistant to the President for political affairs, was liaison to the RNC, at that time chaired by Dick Richards from Utah, another Reagan loyalist.

Early in 1981, as the protracted tax and budget battle was getting under way, Atwater produced the phrase "permanent campaign" to describe the mobilization of an ongoing political network—in this instance one that would help pass the President's tax package. The permanent campaign's acid test came in the spring, when Atwater organized a group of Republican officials, Administration representatives, and Boll Weevils (Southern House Democrats who formed the congressional swing vote for Reagan in the first term) to stump the districts of wavering Southern congressmen.

The tour was as ambitious as an election campaign, generating votes that proved critical to the enactment of the 1981 Economic Recovery Tax Act (ERTA), the centerpiece of the President's economic program. In the process, Atwater's permanent campaign became a model of how to use the RNC, the Administration, and congressional supporters for the passage of legislation. Sadly, it was rarely repeated. Later that year Dick Richards decided the RNC should represent all elected Republican officials, including many who voted consistently against the President. Thereafter, the power of the RNC was never used as effectively, with Richards's successor, Frank Fahrenkopf, also viewing it purely as a fundraising tool.

Now Atwater will have a second chance to test his faith in the raw power of political parties. He views his new role as RNC chairman as more of a scorekeeper and enforcer for the President than an automatic dispenser of perks to Republican officials. The RNC has vast powers. It helps candidates at all levels by providing them with campaign staffers, fundraising, and the highly valued presidential signature for direct-mail solicitations. With Atwater in place, these political services are more likely to be used as rewards rather than rights for Republican candidates.

At the same time, he will attempt to reanimate the party's structure down to the county level, there to gain grassroots support for the President, persuading voters throughout the country to apply their own sort of pressure on their various elected representatives. And he stands a good chance of succeeding: as manager of Reagan's 1984 re-election campaign, Atwater oversaw a grassroots operation that netted 600,000 Reagan-Bush volunteers nationwide.

With a penchant for Machiavelli (he reads *The Prince* twice a year), Atwater devours political biography and analysis. (Despite his scholarly interests, he is a frenetic extrovert: his band once played with Percy Sledge's, and he owns a piece of an Arlington, Virginia, rib joint called "Red, Hot, and Blue.") With some pretension to being a political theorist (his half-finished doctoral dissertation is titled *The Permanent Campaign*), he believes that the GOP can command the loyalty of younger voters for decades if it reaches out to enlist young activists now.

"I'M A THIRTY-YEAR GUY," Atwater likes to tell those with whom he's opening a political acquaintance. "I plan to stay in the game a long, long time." For him, politics is not a way-station on the road to becoming a well-paid Washington corporate lobbyist, but his life work. Now, with the GOP electorally dominant at the presidential level, Atwater has four years to turn the RNC (and the party) into a vehicle for political mobilization at the grassroots level.

Bush's first battle with Congress will be over spending priorities, an opening oddly reminiscent of Reagan's in 1981. Watch for Atwater to create a "permanent campaign" to augment Bush's odds with the Democratic Congress, the first test of whether he can transform the RNC into something other than a moneymaking machine. □

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SHIELD OF FATUITY

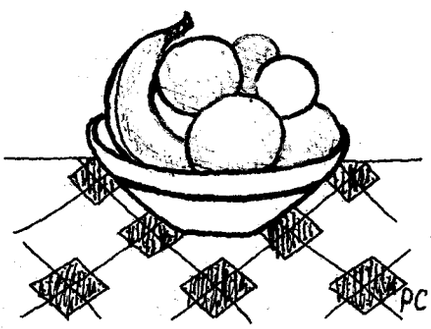
Angelo M. Codevilla

The Shield of Faith: The Hidden Struggle for Strategic Defense, by B. Bruce-Briggs (Simon & Schuster, 464 pp., $22.95)

THIS BOOK is advertised as "the first and only account of strategic defense—the political, military, and technological effort to guard against attacks from the sky. From Civil War balloons to . . . the politics and technology of the Strategic Defense Initiative." But despite flashes of mordant political insight about the great ABM debate of 1965–1975, this is not a serious book. Not only is it marred by constant gratuitous insults and even scatological remarks about individuals, and not only is it chockfull of errors about names, dates, places, and events, but, most important, it contains hardly a whiff of technical fact. The reader is supposed to accept the book's innumerable judgments as to who won or lost a particular technical point usually without the smallest scrap of evidence. When the book, very briefly, touches upon "Star Wars," it reveals the author's total lack of acquaintance with the relevant technology.

Caveat lector: Although I have never met Mr. Bruce-Briggs, we once crossed swords (in *Commentary*, August 1986), and in *The Shield of Faith* he mentions me four times, all rather nastily. But his unsupported accusations against me (e.g., naïve zealotry) as well as his inaccuracies about me (I'm from Italy, not New Jersey; an orphan, not the son of a restaurateur; I am not without technical background; and I never tried for a job in the Reagan Administration) are not the reason why I think this book is trash. Bruce-Briggs treats many people worse than he treats me, and on the basis of even less "evidence." There is an insult on almost every page. For example, presumably unable to find anything else unpleasant to say about Sir Henry Tizard, Bruce-Briggs tells us that his name "rhymes with lizard." He bashes Richard Perle for duplicity and produces a quote from him to the effect that reducing the vulnerability of populations is destabilizing; in fact, Perle was obviously commenting on the consequences of *Soviet* defenses for the American strategy of Mutual Assured Destruction. Bruce-Briggs's remarks on Ronald Reagan are a low point: "He had been in command of a Hollywood cavalry troop, committed to polo and venery. Lieutenant Reagan was known for wielding a formidable missile, but not one that the starlets found offensive." But the book's most gratuitous obscenity is its reproduction of the lengthy suicide note left by an honorable participant in the ABM debate—together with unsupported accusations that he had sex with the nurse who was treating his dying wife.

Bruce-Briggs is no better on "what, when, where, and why" than he is on "who." For example, on page 408 he describes a briefing session for senators on laser weapons. He does not even tell us what year it took place (for the record, it occurred on December 12, 1979), but he does say that "Donald Brennan helped prepare the briefing." In fact, Brennan had nothing whatever to do with it. He names the four briefers but neglects to tell us what they said. Finally, he identifies one of them as Norbert Schnog of the Perkin-Elmer Corporation, "the laser specialists." But Perkin-Elmer's business is optics, not the technology that makes big laser beams, and Schnog spoke on his specialty: actuator-controlled segmented mirrors. Bruce-Briggs tells us that the principal work on laser weaponry in the U.S. is done at AVCO, in Massachusetts. But the only megawatt-sized lasers in America (other than the Neodymium-Glass ones used for fusion experiments) have been built in Southern California, by



John Ardoin is music critic for the Dallas Morning News. *His most recent book is* Callas at Juilliard: The Master Classes *(Knopf).*

Angelo Codevilla, a senior research fellow at the Hoover Institution, is the author of While Others Build: A Commonsense Approach to the Strategic Defense Initiative *(Free Press).*

H. W. Crocker III is a writer and editor based in Washington, D.C.

Paul Gottfried is a senior editor of The World & I.

Richard Vigilante, formerly NR*'s article editor, is a senior fellow at the Manhattan Institute and co-author (with Gregory Sandford) of* Grenada: The Untold Story *(Madison).*

Clyde Wilson teaches history at the University of South Carolina and is the editor of The Papers of John C. Calhoun *(University of South Carolina).*

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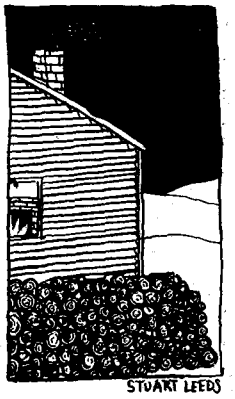
TRW and Rockwell. If Bruce-Briggs is to be believed, an Air Force laser shot a drone out of the sky at White Sands, New Mexico, in 1973. In fact, it was a Navy laser that destroyed a TOW anti-tank missile in flight at San Juan Capistrano, California, in 1978. To correct all this book's factual errors would take a whole other book.

Bruce-Briggs's understanding of his subject matter is even more tenuous than his civility and his grasp of the facts. For example, on page 33 he tells us that the ABM treaty contains "tight limits on the number of radars that could be built." This is nonsense. No serious treatment of the ABM treaty could ever neglect the fate of the American negotiators' number-one objective. Since the treaty does not limit the *production* of anti-missile devices, it was obviously essential to prevent the Soviet Union from building powerful enough radars to deploy them effectively. If such radars were built, all the other provisions of the treaty would be well-nigh meaningless. In fact (as one can see even from the memoirs of chief U.S. negotiator Gerard Smith), the U.S. failed to embody its objective in treaty language. Far from setting "tight limits," the treaty actually allows the Soviets to build as many radars as they like, wherever they like, so long as they say they are for space-tracking or for other non-missile-related functions. They can also build as many overtly missile-related radars as they wish, so long as they are located on the periphery of the country and oriented outward—which is precisely where and how the United States had sited the radars for our own ABM system. In 1975, U.S. intelligence first spotted construction of the giant Pechora-class radar network, which today includes nine installations, each with a power-aperture product hundreds of times greater than that of our best ABM radars. That is what the fuss over the Krasnoyarsk radar is all about. Nowhere does Bruce-Briggs tell us this.



However, in a perverse way this book has its uses. Even if not everyone Bruce-Briggs calls a fool or a knave really is one, the U.S. military-policy community has more than its share of the unseriousness that *The Shield of Faith* describes and embodies. The proof is in the results. Not only does the United States not have any anti-missile or anti-airplane defense, it does not have an offensive strategy worthy of the name, either. "The system" long ago turned in on itself, and let the reality of its daily concerns oust Soviet military preparations from serious consideration. That is why, for example, "the system" took from 1967 to 1980 to decide that we ought to shoot at Soviet missiles rather than at Soviet civilians (President Carter's Decision #59), and then simply failed to produce the weapons necessary to do this, either on the ground or in flight.

Nor has the Reagan Administration improved matters. Indeed, its peculiar contribution to missile defense has been a firm decision to defer indefinitely any decision on whether or not to defend this country.

It has been nearly six years since Ronald Reagan's "Star Wars" speech of March 23, 1983. That is half again as long as the interval between Pearl Harbor and VJ Day. During those 45 months in the 1940s, the U.S. was able to build the atom bomb from scratch, while raising a conventional military force capable of dominating much of the world. Six years is more than twice the time it took to develop the first American long-range missile, the Thor, and almost as long as it took to put a man on the moon. Yet, during these six years, the U.S. has produced not a single anti-missile device of any kind.

Most people believe that, since March 1983, the U.S. Government has been doing its best to implement the Strategic Defense Initiative, and that any delays are due to great technical difficulties. This is not so. In fact, there is more technology available than "the system" knows what to do with. Note that on June 13, 1980, the Pentagon officially submitted to the President and Congress the option to build a prototype of a missile-killing laser, scheduled to fly in November 1986. Indeed, some technology (e.g., the plans for the HOE [Homing Overlay Experiment] guidance system has been stolen and has already been incorporated into the Soviet ABM system (specifically, the SH-11 interceptor). Nor is the ABM treaty the explanation for inaction. Note well that the Reagan Administration has never proposed doing the host of useful things that the Soviet Union is doing in the ABM field, which no one contends are violations of the treaty—e.g., building large, peripheral radars, interceptors (like the Soviet SA-12) that are effective against both airplanes and warheads, and so on.

"The system" is at a standstill for a variety of reasons internal to itself, and because the Presidents who have been nominally in charge have lacked the combination of mind and heart to change it. Several good books have been written on what is wrong with the system and how to fix it. One of them, Edward Luttwak's *The Pentagon and the Art of War*, was even published by Simon & Schuster, which ought to be ashamed of itself for lowering its standards so far as to publish *The Shield of Faith*. □

LETTING REAGAN BE BAKER

Richard Vigilante

Inside the National Security Council: The True Story of the Making and Unmaking of Reagan's Foreign Policy, by Constantine C. Menges (Simon & Schuster, 418 pp., $19.95)

"LET REAGAN BE Reagan" was one of the most popular, and ultimately one of the most bitter, conservative slogans during the last eight years. Particularly in the area of foreign policy, conservatives kept telling each other, the Reagan revolution was being subverted by "pragmatists" and "career bureaucrats" obsessed with reaching "negotiated settlements," whether with congressmen or Communists.

As time wore on, to this indignation was added the frustration of self-doubt: Perhaps Reagan really wanted to do it the pragmatists' way? Or perhaps the pros and the pragmatists shared Reaganite goals but pursued them by skills and arts incomprehensible to inexperienced ideologues? Maybe the Reaganites were just in the way?

Constantine Menges's shocking, detailed account of his years as a senior policy staffer at the National Security

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RANDOM NOTES

☐ More January Titles: In *At Reagan's Side: Twenty Years in the Political Mainstream* (Doubleday, $18.95), Helene von Damm—a professional associate of Ronald Reagan for over twenty years in capacities ranging from typist to U.S. Ambassador to Austria—provides yet another insider's account of crisis and routine in the Reagan White House.

Egypt after Nasser: Sadat, Peace, and the Mirage of Prosperity (Paragon, $22.95), by Thomas W. Lippman, is an interesting account, by the former Cairo bureau chief of the *Washington Post*, of the decline of Egypt from the palmy days of President Anwar Sadat—before, that is, Sadat initiated the autocratic rule, "disguised as a manifestation of popular will," that led ultimately to his assassination—to the present state of economic chaos and social and political stagnation under the admittedly incorruptible Hosni Mubarak.

In *On the Brink: Americans and Soviets Re-examine the Cuban Missile Crisis* (Hill & Wang, $24.95), James G. Blight and David A. Welch have done a superb job of editing transcripts of two conferences, held in 1987, at which a wide variety of participants in the events of 1962 were brought together for the purpose of retracing, reviewing, and reconsidering the elements of the crisis. Among those taking part are Robert McNamara, Dean Rusk, Maxwell Taylor, McGeorge Bundy, George Ball, Richard Neustadt, one of Khrushchev's speechwriters, and a senior member of the Soviet Central Committee.

☐ Coming in March: *Of Arms and Men: A History of War, Weapons, and Aggression* (Oxford, $24.95), by Robert L. O'Connell, an analyst for the U.S. Army Intelligence Agency, argues that while by the middle of the sixteenth century nearly every potential of high-technology warfare had been anticipated, the effectiveness of all-out warfare against non-combatants suggests "one more strand in the cord that could strangle war as a viable instrument of policy and establish the paradoxical logic of deterrence as the central reference point in international affairs."

I. A. Richards: His Life and Work (Johns Hopkins, $39.95), by John Paul Russo, looks to be an excellent biography of one of the twentieth century's most influential literary critics, somewhat New Critic, and self-proclaimed anarchist. —CW

Council unfortunately seems to put most of these doubts to rest. It is possible to imagine other plausible interpretations, but if Menges is right, the good news/bad news breaks down about like this: Reagan was a Reaganite and the Reaganites weren't paranoid. On the other hand, there was a conscious conspiracy led by senior State Department officials (mostly career professionals but including the Secretary of State) to undermine the Reagan strategy in Central America and elsewhere. In this they seemed to have had the frequent, effective cooperation of White House Chief of Staff James Baker and of presidential advisor Michael Deaver, though neither their motives nor the consistency of their cooperation could be counted on.

In essence, the State-Shultz policy in Central America, Menges's area of expertise, was to concede the inevitability of Communist rule in Nicaragua, and to accept and even assist the Sandinista regime in exchange for unenforceable promises not to spread the revolution to El Salvador and the rest of Central America. The Shultz-State conspiracy, according to Menges, included deliberate and protracted efforts to deceive the President; unauthorized dismissal of presidential appointees, including U.S. ambassadors; unauthorized negotiations with the Sandinistas; and a plot to impose on the President a Central American peace treaty based on principles the President had repeatedly, insistently, and even angrily vetoed at full meetings of the National Security Council.

I served briefly in the Reagan White House writing speeches and position papers on Central America. It was not an experience I would recommend. I once spent much of one full month trying to get through the "interagency clearance process" (i.e., State) a sentence describing the Salvadoran guerrillas as "Communists." Previous policy had been to describe them as "leftists," as if the people of El Salvador were being terrorized by roving bands of McGovernites.

Thus I knew Menges (and North and many of the other players slightly) and was involved in a minor way in the conflicts over policy. Nevertheless, I was shocked by Menges's book. In his chapters on Central American policy, for instance, he identifies seven individual attempts by Shultz and the State Department to substitute State's policy for Reagan's.

On one occasion, Reagan, seeking to bolster the morale of the four Central American presidents and keep them publicly committed to the hardline position, sent each of them a letter, by way of UN Ambassador Jeane Kirkpatrick, affirming that his own position on Nicaragua had not changed and would not waver. In response, Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs Thomas Enders sent a diplomatic cable to all the American ambassadors in the region telling them to disregard the Reagan letter in their dealings with host governments because a change of policy was imminent.

In late 1983 and early 1984, the State strategy took the shape of a four-point peace plan that, among other provisions, would have placed unprecedented restrictions on the U.S. military (including naval) presence throughout the region, while requiring no verifiable reciprocal action from the Sandinistas. Reagan quashed this plan every time it surfaced.

Yet in early 1984, according to Menges, State Department personnel presented this very plan to Sandinista negotiators at a secret, bilateral negotiating session in Mexico. This was done not only over Reagan's veto of the plan but in defiance of repeated promises to our Central American allies that we would not enter bilateral negotiations and would not, having asked them to incur the displeasure of the Sandinistas, allow a peace agreement that would leave an unregenerate and unrestrained Sandinista regime in power.

Just a few months later, if Menges is correct. State had prepared a sixty-page draft peace treaty along the lines of the four-point plan, a treaty assiduously hidden from officials in the Defense Department, the CIA, and the NSC who were legally entitled to review it. State's intention, it seems probable, was to get the Sandinistas to agree to the treaty just days before the 1984 U.S. presidential election and

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then, after the inevitable leaks, present it to Reagan as a *fait accompli*, a victory he could not refuse. This plan, like many, though not all the others, was foiled by Reagan himself, though as usual the perpetrators went unpunished.

Menges was no longer in the government by the time the Contras accepted the inevitable (or State's version thereof) and signed their separate truce with the Sandinistas, essentially terminating the Reagan strategy. So this book does not tell us exactly what events inside the Administration may have prompted the Contras' resignation. We only know that State got its way in the end.

There are no more tired conservative clichés than the ones about "those sellouts at State." The postwar conservative movement was built largely on anxieties about misdeeds at Foggy Bottom. Sheer originality would have made a book proving that we have been imagining it all along much cheerier reading. But if Menges is right —and his assertions are very specific and should be relatively easy to check —we haven't been imagining it and even under Reagan we weren't able to do anything about it. They won hands down simply by defying the President of the United States.

Finally, Menges argues that without the conspiracy, the Iranamok scandal would have been impossible. Few of the conspirators were involved in the Contra-funding side of that debacle, and most of them opposed the arms sales to Iran. But by the beginning of the second Reagan term, the conspiracy had all but destroyed the White House foreign-policy-making process.

After harassing Judge Clark out of the chairmanship of the NSC, the State-Shultz-and-sometimes-Baker axis installed Bud McFarlane in his place, made it a condition of his tenure that he kow-tow to State (which is exactly what the NSC is not supposed to do), and purged candid or Reaganite NSC staffers. By capturing the NSC, the axis achieved substantial control of the information that got to the President, an essential move if it was to be allowed to run a private foreign policy.

But in going around the system they not only violated its rules but subverted its essential ethic, which is that differences on policy are to be settled by a relatively fair and open campaign for the President's vote. Set up a system in which the only way to win is to deny others fair access to the President, or deny the President himself vital information, or even lie to him, and soon everyone will be playing. But not all the players will be staid WASP pessimists from Groton. Some of them will be semi-crazed Catholic Marine colonels and con-men with messiah complexes, who will take the prevailing chaos as a license to play James Bond. But Menges's fascinating account of Ollie North I will reserve for those who buy the book. □

WINSTON!

H. W. Crocker III

The Last Lion: Winston Spencer Churchill: Alone: 1932-1940, by William Manchester (Little, Brown, 756 pp., $24.95)

Winston S. Churchill, Vol. VIII: Never Despair: 1945-1965, by Martin Gilbert (Houghton Mifflin, 1,456 pp., $40)

IT IS A TRIBUTE to William Manchester's talent that he has made this oft-told story of Winston Churchill's wilderness years compelling all over again in volume two of his projected three-part biography: *The Last Lion: Alone*. To Manchester, it is in these years—more so even than in the war years—that Churchill's valor, vision, and courage shone through.

There are occasional lapses: a few poorly chosen metaphors, Manchester's persistent interest in matters prurient, and a bit too much sympathy for Stalin's decisions to embrace Hitler and, most egregiously, to attack Finland. But lapses though they are, they do not discredit the thrust of the book. Nor does Manchester succumb to tendentious leftism. For example, in writing of pro-Stalin intellectuals who visited the Soviet Union, he says, "As one of the most celebrated journalists of his time, [Lincoln] Steffens should have investigated his host's policy of collectivization and its ghastly results. Only a willing dupe could say of such a holocaust that it worked. If it did, so did Auschwitz."

The temper of the time was bad. One out of every five students at Cambridge was a registered member of the Communist Party of Great Britain; the Oxford Union had resolved that under no circumstances would it fight for King and Country; the Labour Party was vehemently opposed to any form of rearmament; and the Conservative Party, led first by Stanley Baldwin and then by Neville Chamberlain, was parochial in its outlook and businesslike in its approach to government—a recipe for disaster in foreign affairs. As Manchester notes, "To Churchill a strong England was one capable of defending itself. To Chamberlain it meant balanced budgets."

To almost no one did England's strength and victorious stature rest upon enforcing the peace won at the end of the Great War by making Germany adhere to the Treaty of Versailles. So blatantly was the treaty violated that at the time of the *Anschluss* the Germans were capable of mobilizing 4,126,200 well-trained soldiers. (The Treaty of Versailles had limited them to 100,000.) By the time Germany invaded Poland, with Britain pledged to come to the Poles' defense, Britain had virtually no army at all. In 1914, Churchill, as First Lord of the Admiralty, had arranged transport for seven divisions to cross the Channel and enter France. In 1939, four divisions were available. None of them was armored.

But even France, which did have an army, a large one, was afraid to strike against Hitler lest she provoke reprisals from a country with which she was already at war. With the Germans preoccupied with devastating Poland, the French army outnumbered the Germans posted in the west by more than 2 to 1; furthermore, France would have been throwing her best troops at Hitler's least imposing forces. But the French—with the exception of one ludicrous sally—refused to budge.

The malaise of the French and the unpreparedness of the British were the products of fearful memories of the First World War, of cowardice that led both to deceit and to stubborn, willful self-deception, and perhaps of the fact that—as Manchester remarks in another context—in Britain "the well-bred still recoiled from the chauvinism without which great victories are impossible."

But against the violence of the Nazis, the opportunistic bullying of Mussolini, the massive power of France cowering behind the Maginot Line, and the arrogance of Neville Chamberlain—a seeming embodiment of Woodrow Wilson's phrase about being "too proud

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to fight"—there emerged one hunched, indomitable, bulldog figure: *Winston.*

> . . . hardly had Chamberlain's voice died away than the piercing wail of air-raid sirens, later to become so familiar to an entire generation of Englishmen, sounded all over the city. Winston, Clementine, and Inspector Thompson hurried toward the door. "You know, you've got to hand it to Hitler," said Churchill—heading for the roof, not the shelter—"The war is less than a half-hour old, and already he has bombers over London." Actually, the alarm was false, though Churchill didn't know it as he gazed out, as he put it, "in the clear, cool September light" to watch "thirty or forty cylindrical balloons" slowly rising above the city. "It was with difficulty," Inspector Thompson recalled, "that we prevailed upon him to enter an air-raid shelter. He only agreed to go when it was pointed out to him that it was up to him to set an example. Down we went . . . the Old Man with a bottle of brandy under his arm."

If the sweep of events at times threatens to submerge Churchill in Manchester's biography of him—which hardly seems possible, but is—there is no such difficulty with the last volume of the official biography by Martin Gilbert, in which Churchill is the focus of, and quoted on, every page.

Churchill had some very definite ideas about how life should be lived. When an American told him that he worked from 8 to 5:30 during the week, with a short break for lunch, and occasionally came to the office to look at the mail on Saturdays, Winston responded:

> My dear man, you don't mean it. That is the most perfect prescription for a short life that I've ever heard. . . . You must sleep sometime between lunch and dinner, and no half-way measures. Take off your clothes and get into bed. That's what I always do. Don't think you will be doing less work because you sleep during the day. That's a foolish notion held by people with no imagination. You will be able to accomplish more. You get two days in one—well, at least one and a half, I'm sure. . . . Sleep enables you to be at your best in the evening when you join your wife, family, and friends for dinner. . . . that is the great moment of the day. Man is the ruler then . . . and the ladies must not leave the table too soon. . . . Do you always get up for breakfast? . . . Your wife too? . . . My, my! My wife and I tried two or three times in the last forty years to have breakfast together, but it didn't work. Breakfast should be had in bed, alone. Not downstairs, after one has dressed. . . . I don't think our married life would have been nearly so happy if we had both dressed and come down for breakfast all these years.

The Churchill captured in Gilbert's volume is a man whose courage, energy, and intelligence endured for a remarkable span. His chief political preoccupations from 1945 to his death centered on improving relations between the Soviets and the West—though he never lost his grasp of the realities of Soviet tyranny ("If I had been properly supported in 1919," he said in 1954, "I think we might have strangled Bolshevism in its cradle, but everybody turned up their hands and said, 'How shocking!' ")—and on maintaining and strengthening the Anglo-American alliance.

There are some healthy reminders in Gilbert's book that Churchill continued to be a prophet no one wanted to hear. The reception given his "Iron Curtain" speech in both the British and the American press was anything but favorable, and 93 Labour MPs even put forward a motion of censure against him. (Churchill refused, despite all his experience, to believe that the only lesson of history is that man is unteachable, though he frequently posed the question.)

The victim of several strokes, Churchill nevertheless remained an active politician into his eighties; and although he *did* never despair (despite his bouts with the "black dog" of depression) his advice to the Almighty partook greatly of *Realpolitik*: "I think the earth will soon be destroyed by a cobalt bomb. I think if I were the Almighty I would not recreate it in case they destroyed me too the next time." I wonder if he's advising Him now. □

HIGH NOON IN BUDAPEST

Paul Gottfried

Budapest 1900: A Historical Portrait of a City and Its Culture, by John Lukacs (Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 255 pp., $20.95)

IN A PUBLISHER'S advertisement for John Lukacs's newest book, we are told: "Not unlike Carl Schorske's *Fin-de-Siècle Vienna*, *Budapest 1900* offers an intimate history of one of the great European capitals at its zenith." Now, it is true that Lukacs, like Schorske, deals with one of the political capitals of the Dual Monarchy: a constitutional creation set up in 1867, which provided for the internal autonomy of the Hungarian nation within the Austrian empire. Moreover, Lukacs, like Schorske, portrays the Central European bourgeoisie at the beginning of the century as beset by problems, amid a flowering of urban culture.

Even so, these two historians have produced dramatically different books. Schorske writes in a ponderous style, applying psycho-Marxist categories to a bourgeois society he plainly detests. Lukacs, by contrast, writes with verve and affection about his forefathers' world. Indeed, he draws on family memory when he recounts how his grandparents only rarely changed apartments in Budapest or how his grandparents and later his parents as newlyweds took rail trips to Venice from the elegant South Station in Buda. Lukacs scatters evidence (often in footnotes) of his own connections among the gentry, and he is effusively knowledgeable about the way Hungarians tended vineyards, rode horses, and flirted with women. Scenes of wine being made in the hills above Budapest and of pastry-eating and party-going in the Inner City recall a compliment paid to the French historian Fernand Braudel: "One can taste the

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olives growing on the vines in his Mediterranean cities." Like Braudel in his reconstruction of medieval Mediterranean society, Lukacs is unstintingly generous with the details of urban life. From the composition of outhouses to the frequency of abortions to the popular reaction to civic monuments, he tells his reader all that he can possibly cram into a 255-page "historical portrait."

Though Lukacs cultivates what seems an impressionistic style, he is a serious historian, shaking his fist at today's pseudo-scientific historiography. We receive the same message from the opening scene—the funeral procession of the Hungarian muralist Mihaly Munkacsy on May 1, 1900—to the close of the book. For Lukacs, what is historically significant is what leaves its imprint on the minds of nations and of generations. History, he says in *Historical Consciousness*, is not a science but a means of remembering the past, which takes different forms at different times. The funerals of Munkacsy and (in 1894) of the patriot Lajos Kossuth were watersheds in the way Hungarians viewed, and still view, their past. They represented generational change taking place at the high noon of Hungary's political greatness. In describing the districts of Pest (the more populous of the twin cities forming the Hungarian capital), Lukacs pays more attention to where Franz Josef took his oath as Hungarian king than to the appearance of the workers' quarters. He quite deliberately stresses the development of peoples, not of changing forces of production. Workers, like others, belong to nations and share their memories and values.

The text that shaped this work is an impressive cultural study, *Three Generations*, by the Hungarian social historian Gyula Szekfü. Surveying Hungarian affairs in 1919, after a disastrous defeat in the First World War and a subsequent civil war, Szekfü ascribed his country's downfall to the deteriorating character of three successive generations of Hungarian leaders. It was the genius of the Hungarian Protestant statesman Ferenc Deák that had brought Hungary to the triumph of the Dual Monarchy, within two decades of the suppressed revolution of 1848. The lack of statesmanship among the largely Calvinist leadership of the dominant Liberal Party at the end of the century and Hungary's excessively rapid urbanization contributed to the unraveling of Deák's work.

Though Lukacs does not accept all the twists in Szekfü's interpretation, he praises him more than any other Hungarian social thinker. He gives us Szekfü's portrait of Istvan Tisza, the early-twentieth-century Hungarian prime minister, and, like Szekfü, he depicts Tisza as a morally rigid advocate of a sort of rural nationalism thrust into a position for which he was temperamentally unsuited. On balance, however, Lukacs is more appreciative than critical of those his mentor had chastised. It is not Szekfü's fire and brimstone but his stress on generational and national character that has marked Lukacs decisively. *Three Generations* helped make him what he remains in this book: our most profoundly philosophical contemporary historian. □

CONFESSIONS OF AN AGRARIAN GROUPIE

Clyde Wilson

Allen Tate: A Recollection, by Walter Sullivan (Louisiana State University, 117 pp., $16.95)

INFERIOR MINDS are interested in things. Average minds are interested in personalities. Superior minds are interested in principles. The lower categories are excluded from the higher, but the reverse is not true. A superior mind also exists in the worlds of things and personalities.

Allen Tate's was a mind of the third category, but this memoir by Professor Walter Sullivan of Vanderbilt University, who was a member of Tate's "circle" from the 1940s until Tate's death in 1979, is concerned with the realm of personality. Tate's character flaws, weak moments, very active sex life, and senescent infirmities are graphically remembered in this unquestionably well-crafted and powerful biographical document. It is an example of the now familiar genre of revelation about the personal lives of authors, setting at naught Faulkner's dictum that the important thing about a writer is his work. The tone is established by a remark of Brainard Cheney, an intimate of most of the Agrarian-Fugitive group, in regard to Tate, as rendered by Sullivan: "He's a

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monster! Goddamn it, he's a monster! But I love him."

The central members of the Agrarian-Fugitive group—Davidson, Warren, Lytle, Ransom, and Tate—loom large in the creative literature and criticism of the twentieth century, and almost as large in social thought, as is testified by their ever-widening rings of disciples, now into a third generation, and by the continuing output of literature on them. Why this is so is not yet fully explicated, though the ultimate answer will probably lie in the region suggested by Tate himself in a few brief, casual, and crucial essays on Southern literature as the product of a uniquely pregnant moment of transition from tradition to modernism.

The centrality of these writers to intellectual life in the West is an amazing phenomenon when you consider that they lived most of their lives and did most of their work (with the partial exception of Warren) in a world that was alien and inhospitable to them—in its prosperity, utilitarian manners, bureaucratization of art and scholarship, innocence of guilt and sin, and triumphant materialism. They were marginal men in nearly every respect except the most important—their personal integrity, their dedication to craft, and their crucial purchase on the disintegrations of modernism.

None was more marginal than Tate, who alone among this group pursued the life of the unrooted Bohemian artist-intellectual on both sides of the Atlantic, who literally lived by his wits for much of his life, and who flouted many of the traditional conventions. Not the greatest artist among the Agrarians; not, contrary to Sullivan (like Tate, a Roman Catholic convert), the best theologian (a distinction that belongs to Andrew Lytle), Tate nevertheless combined the highest skills of poet, critic, and essayist to become, as M. E. Bradford has put it, "the most complete example" of "the man of letters in the antique European sense" among contemporary Americans.

For this reason, it is possible that Tate will find his place among the small company (after Yeats and Eliot) who will be looked back upon by intellectual historians as exemplary figures of our age, as Erasmus was for the sixteenth century and Goethe for the eighteenth. If so, he will be exemplary both in his poetic vision and intellectual formulations and in his disordered private life, which is so thoroughly and skillfully examined here.

As a historian I can by no means approve the suppression of the record, but one wonders why Professor Sullivan did not deposit this recollection in the Vanderbilt University library for the use of future biographers. The decision to publish at this time, when a number of the persons portrayed are still living, is especially puzzling because Sullivan has been an eloquent opponent of the graphicness of modern literature. To advocate reticence in art while publishing ugly stories about one's friends seems to me exactly the opposite of the course that would be pursued by a proper disciple of the Agrarians, who advocated and displayed integrity in art and good manners in private life.

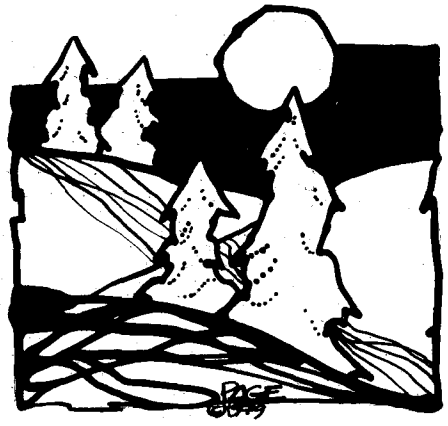
Sullivan's treatment is not and is not intended to be a contribution to intellectual history or an examination of Tate's place in letters. Its intent is biographical context, a cause it serves forcefully. But the most important thing about a writer, or probably about any man (except for that part best known to his Creator), is indeed his work, which this book illuminates only marginally, if at all. In fact, we are not yet at the point where Tate and his confrères can be assessed with true historical perspective, though perhaps we soon will be. This book, as the author probably knows, is a document of the transition. □

MUSIC

BERNSTEIN AT SEVENTY

John Ardoin

ONLY SOMEONE who has been on vacation in Antarctica could have failed to realize that Leonard Bernstein was seventy in August. The press, the record companies, and the musical world in general have been turning themselves upside down to find new ways to explain and honor him. A community of promoters, commentators, and concert-goers who formerly baited or begrudgingly admired him are behaving as though a brash showoff had suddenly been transformed into a venerable, white-maned maestro.



While no doubt savoring the birthday tributes and these hard-won accolades, Bernstein must be wearing a slight smile of cynicism, at the very least. How could it be otherwise, when critics who once spent most of their space deriding him as facile and deploring his podium manners now describe his exuberant gestures as the reflection of profound insights and an intense commitment to music? What must go through his mind when those who had long complained that his classical compositions were too popular or his popular music too highbrow now laud his versatility?

His one comment in this anniversary year has been to observe that he is not seventy but "twice 35." But 280 sounds closer to the mark, for he has packed into his seventy years careers diverse and rich enough for four people. A conductor, yes; a pianist, of course; a teacher, certainly. But above all, a composer.

For four decades, Bernstein has dominated what is interesting in America's musical life, and no other individual has so altered the face of music in this land. When he burst into our consciousness on November 14, 1943, at age 25, with a concert with the New York Philharmonic, there was no such thing as an important American conductor. Moreover, there was no such thing as a conductor of any nationality in his twenties or even thirties who was taken seriously.

Conducting was the domain of Europeans; someone forty was called a "young conductor." So Bernstein began with two strikes against him. And he was not only a young American conductor, but a young Jewish American conductor. His mentor, Serge Koussevitzky, had solemnly warned him that the name Bernstein would never appear on a poster outside Carnegie

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Hall and had seriously urged him to switch to Leonard S. Burns.

But Bernstein didn't strike out. Instead, he got the chance of a lifetime that fall day in the midst of World War II. Bruno Walter, the Philharmonic's guest conductor, fell ill and Bernstein replaced him on a few hours' notice, without a rehearsal, for a Sunday-afternoon national broadcast. It was the oldest scenario in the books: Star becomes sick, understudy steps in, understudy becomes an overnight sensation.

His Philharmonic debut was a national event, reported on page one of the *New York Times*. He started at the top and stayed there. His subsequent triumphs threw open the doors to succeeding generations of American conductors such as Michael Tilson Thomas and James Levine. But Bernstein did more than set an example. He extended a helping hand by showcasing younger colleagues and making the post of assistant conductor of the Philharmonic (which he took over as music director in 1958) truly meaningful and active.

He has also done inestimable service to the cause of American music by using his popularity and position to champion the works of men as diverse as Charles Ives, David Diamond, Ned Rorem, and John Cage. At the same time he has made his own presence as a composer felt through his concert music (first with the *Jeremiah* Symphony and the ballet *Fancy Free*) and theater pieces (starting with *On the Town*).

But two platforms and audiences of thousands were hardly sufficient for the many Bernsteins and all they had to say, and soon he was a familiar figure on television, expounding to millions on everything from what makes jazz jazzy to how Beethoven wrote his Fifth Symphony. What he was dispensing was not simply information, however engagingly presented, but a sense that music is interwoven into the fabric of life and a precious part of our heritage.

Many of the contradictions that have swirled around him have been the creations of writers determined to categorize him but not knowing how. Their repeated attempts to pigeonhole him have reminded me of the old parable about the blind men and the elephant. Asked to describe the beast, one felt the trunk, another the tail, still another a leg. Each had a different answer, but their inadequate reactions could not make the animal less imposing.

Like Gustav Mahler, once the Philharmonic's music director and whom Bernstein venerates and identifies with, he has had a career that is a fascinating series of contradictions. He has had total fame as a performer, but wants to be remembered as a creator. He craves to be accepted and respected by his fellow composers, but has resisted the prevailing tides of serialism and experimentation and sided instead with tonality and melody.

And Bernstein the composer subdivides into at least two different personalities. There is Lenny—the savvy secularist, the composer of "New York" music from *On the Town* to *On the Waterfront*. And there is Leonard, the serious sacred composer, who can find equally new and arresting ways to deal with the Jewish Kaddish and the Catholic Mass and break new ground within traditional symphonic and concerto forms.

The common plane for both is faith and the questioning of that faith publicly in order to reaffirm it. It can be faith in an idea, in a person, or in all mankind. Bernstein doesn't think small. And everything he does is the act of a man committed to other men. In a moving essay in a collection of his writings entitled *Findings* (oh yes, he is also the author of four books) there is a passionate confession by Bernstein the humanist that contributes greatly to our empathy with Bernstein the musician. He writes:

> I believe in people. I feel, love and need, and respect people above all else, including the arts, natural scenery, organized piety, or national superstructures. One human figure on the slope of an Alp can make the Alp disappear for me . . . One person fighting for truth can disqualify for me the platitudes of centuries. And one human being who meets with injustice can render invalid the entire system which has dispensed it. . . .
>
> Man cannot have dignity without loving the dignity of his fellow. I believe in the potential of people. I cannot rest passively with those who give up in the name of "human nature" . . . I believe in man's unconscious, the deep spring from which comes his power to communicate and love . . . What art can do is extend this communication, magnify it, and carry it to vastly greater numbers of people.

The Bernstein birthday party will

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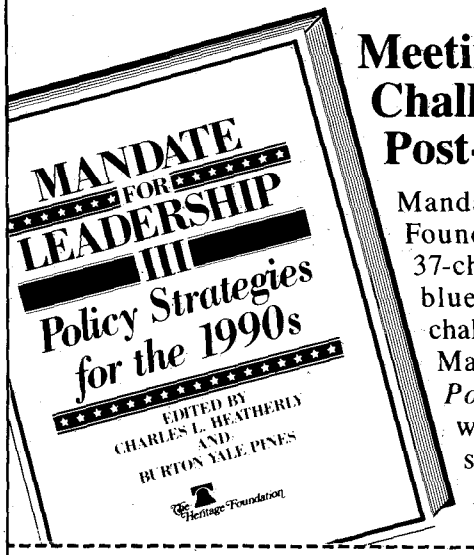
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continue all season across the land. Here are some of the candles waiting to be lit:

New York: The New York Philharmonic has scheduled 19 Bernstein scores this season at Lincoln Center. Still to come are the suite from the ballet *Fancy Free* on February 1, 2, 3, and 4, *Songfest* on February 16, 17, and 18, and the ballet *Facsimile* on May 25, 26, and 27. The American Symphony performs *Trouble in Tahiti* and *Shivaree* at Carnegie Hall on February 19.

Portland, Oregon: The Columbia Symphony will offer one of Bernstein's most recent works, *Opening Prayer*, on February 3.

Chicago: The Chicago Symphony is planning Symphony No. 1, *The Age of Anxiety*, on April 27, 28, and 29.

Dallas: The Dallas Lyric Opera will be staging *Candide* on June 11, 14, 16, and 17. □

THE RIGHT BOOKS / CHILTON WILLIAMSON JR.

I HAD EXPECTED *Searching for Safety* (Transaction Books, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, N.J. 08903; $32.95), by Aaron Wildavsky, to be an extended discussion of what P. J. O'Rourke has called "the safety Nazis." I was surprised, but not disappointed, to discover that it is instead a theoretical discourse on the subject of prudence versus adventurousness in the development and application of human ingenuity, and of the wisdom of modern society's attempts at eradicating the last vestige of risk not just to the whole but to each and every one of its parts. Like everything of Professor Wildavsky's that I have read, *Searching for Safety* is well researched and well thought out, well organized—though repetitive in places—and well written. It is a book that will be of interest to philosophers engaged in exploring the unreality and hubris of the contemporary mind in yet another of its fascinating permutations, as well as to political scientists and serious journalists embroiled in a loud and vigorously waged public debate.

"Thinking about risk," Professor Wildavsky writes in his introduction,

> . . . has been one-sided; safety has been over-identified with keeping things from happening. My aim is to redress this imbalance by emphasizing the increases in safety due to entrepreneurial activity. If this essay in persuasion achieves its purpose, the focus of the risk debate will shift from the passive prevention of harm to a more active search for safety.
>
> This book is about how risk and safety are produced, about the fact that they are intertwined, and about what, therefore, should be done to make the search for better combinations both efficient—devoting resources to the worst hazards—and effective—actually improving safety. Because safety must be discovered, and cannot be merely chosen, I shall argue that trial-and-error risk taking, rather than risk aversion, is the preferable strategy for securing safety.

Life, Professor Wildavsky believes, is too complex, too insufficiently straightforward, for human governors confidently to identify what is life-enhancing, what life-denying or -threatening, and to proceed simply to regulate in the interests of the first and against those of the second.

> For the most part, safety and danger coexist in the same objects and practices. . . . The trick is to discover not how to avoid risk, for this is impossible, but how to use risk to get more of the good and less of the bad. The search for safety is a balancing act. . . . If every act and every thing has harm for someone somewhere, indeed, if the safety we seek is ineluctably bound up with the danger that accompanies it, more harm than good may be done by efforts to avoid risk. . . . Which set of principles, axioms, and rules, I ask, helps us discover how to reduce risk overall so that society as a whole becomes safer? . . . My candidates in opening up the inquiry on risk and safety are: the principle of uncertainty, the axiom of connectedness, and the rule of sacrifice.

Until quite recently, Professor Wildavsky argues, the law of human progress was that of trial-and-error, which in recent years, however (say, the past twenty), has been amended to "no trials without prior guarantees against error." In this development, he believes, we see the triumph of the argument for "anticipation" rather than for "resilience" as the primary means of combating putative dangers; of a strategy based on the desire to avoid every potential risk at all available costs, instead of one predicated upon an ability to cope with unanticipated dangers after they have emerged and been identified. The direct result of the "no-trials-without-prior-guarantees" approach is the loss of "the opportunity to take risks in order to achieve beneficial consequences"—among them the knowledge that error produces and that translates cumulatively into a more knowledgeable society better equipped to deal flexibly with adversity. Safety, for Professor Wildavsky, is neither "a hothouse plant that can survive only in a carefully controlled environment," nor "a ripe fruit waiting to be plucked." Rather, it "results from a . . . competitive, evolutionary, trial-and-error process," attempts to short-circuit which by "wishing the end—safety" without allowing the means to it—"decentralized search"—must ultimately be self-defeating.

In a procession of fascinating chapters, several of them written with the aid of specialists in other fields, Professor Wildavsky shows how the strategy of resilience tends to prevail over that of anticipation in the evolution of non-human life forms, as well as in the functioning of the human body itself. He shows how, in the highly emotional and much-politicized case of the nuclear-energy industry, regulatory attempts to ensure absolute safety of the parts may heighten the likelihood of catastrophe by increased tinkering, as well as by the greater rigidity of the entire system. There is risk in every action, Professor Wildavsky reminds us, including those actions taken for the sole purpose of reducing risk; and man is in at least as much danger when playing God on Three Mile Island as he is when playing God in Yellowstone.

In nature, the parts of a system often fail or die off while the whole survives, and Professor Wildavsky suggests that the same rule may apply to the human community, whose case, however, is made more complicated by its tendency to divide into innumerable short-sighted and self-interested political lobbies. For the sake of the long-term betterment of us all, he urges, the emotional appeal of these must be diluted, and their immediate effectiveness curtailed. □

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TRAVEL

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Priscilla L. Buckley

SOME THINGS should be understood before embarking on an Alaskan cruise. On the Inland Waterway in "Southeast," as Alaskans call the long, thin appendix that skirts Canada's west coast, it will rain, it will be dank, it may even in full summer be cold. The first towns you come to—Ketchikan, Juneau, Skagway, Haines—saw their heyday ninety years ago during the Gold Rush and have been in decline ever since. But the wooden sidewalks, the rainbeaten shingle and log houses, the steep staircases leading from one street level to the next, the towering, encompassing mountains, make the world of Bret Harte and Jack London all the more believable.

At Prince Rupert, north of Victoria, we board the *Exploration Starship*, a bright, airy, commodious cruiseliner with spacious cabins and well-decorated public rooms. The crew is of many races but as one in courtesy and helpfulness. And the programs the ship offers are diversified: city tours, lake fishing, floating trips, nature walks, helicopter flights—something for every taste.

We are threading our way through Misty Fjord when I wake the next morning. Mist and clouds and spitting rain can't totally blot out cascading waterfalls, steep hills, and granite cliffs that spill down to the water. The slim spruces, dark on this dark morning, are survivors like so much else in Alaska, their girlish figures belying their hundred years.

At Ketchikan, "Gateway to Alaska," it drizzles, but more off than on, practically good weather in a town that logs 13 feet (*feet!*) of rain a year. We stroll down Creek Street, Ketchikan's showplace: small ocher, brown, and grey frame houses built on pilings along a salmon run, all self-deprecating save one, Dolly's House, dressed to kill in a coat of bright turquoise, now a museum, it was once the place of business of Ketchikan's leading madam. This is late August, the last trip of the short summer season for the cruiseliners. Two weeks from now, these small Southeast towns will start their long winter hibernation—except Juneau, the unlikely capital of the nation's largest (in area) state, a capital that cannot be reached by road or rail.

As we sail in to Juneau we don't see the mountains that envelop the city: at the moment, they are enveloped in clouds. On the cliffside above the town sits a burned-out, derelict structure that was once a gold mine. But there is no melancholy in the greeting we get from my old and well-loved friend Louise Dibble, awaiting us at the foot of the gangplank: petite, smiling, aristocratic, dressed for Alaskan weather in a flowing cape and a hat that on anyone less well turned out would be called a sombrero. She has rented a car and we head down an impressive four-lane highway for the Mendenhall Glacier. As we come around a bend in the road, we see Mendenhall, looking like a frozen white-and-blue Niagara Falls, caught in a single frame of a movie camera. It is immense, a gigantic river of ice and rock. As we watch, a strip of ice falls off its face into the cloudy glacier-green waters below. This process is known as "calving."

After a quick tour of the town, Louise takes us to a salmon bake, which is to an Alaskan what a barbecue is to a Texan. It's served in a rough-hewn log dining room with a fire blazing in one corner. A young man in a white apron cooks marinated salmon steaks over a fire of alder logs. He dishes out the salmon, short ribs, and fried halibut, adds a dollop of baked beans, and we help ourselves to fresh-baked cornbread. A sturdy California red served in glasses more jelly-jar than Baccarat completes a wonderfully satisfying meal. It may be the best salmon any one of us has ever tasted.

Skagway is the northernmost port on the inland waterway. From here gold miners headed for the Yukon and the Klondike, climbing or later taking a train over White Pass to Benedict and Whitehorse Junction. Some years back this spur of the railway was shut down, and Skagway is dying.

In 1887 the population of Skagway was two; in 1889, it was ten thousand, among them a desperado named Soapy Smith. We are greeted at the dock by an amiable young gentleman in frock coat driving a bright yellow 1920s Dodge touring car. He conducts the City Tour, which is quickly done—a half-dozen streets with small rough houses, a stream running through a backyard, in which we can see the spawning salmon leap. And then to Gold Rush cemetery on a shady hillside outside town to see the tombs of Soapy Smith and deputy Frank Reid, who shot it out one night back in '89. A granite monument attests to the fact that Frank Reid "died for the glory of Skagway."

We're in luck. It is only the second time this season that *Starship* has been allowed into Glacier Bay National Park, where traffic is tightly restricted.

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It is a bay carved out by advancing and retreating glaciers over the centuries. It is bordered by rain forests and is rich in aquatic life. Rosa, a Park Ranger, faces frigid passengers on the observation deck in their by-now-familiar foul-weather gear. Rosa comments that Thoreau once wrote, "If I wished to see something beautiful in nature I would go to it in foul weather so that I would be there when it cleared up." Groans. Crystal-ball stuff. The rains stop and the clouds part. As we sail out of Glacier Bay to Adelphus Point this afternoon to watch the humpback whales feed, the setting sun will catch the peaks and clusterings of mountains and long silver stretches of water, and highlight—irradiate—stands of spruce and the yellowing alders.

We pass John Hopkins, five tidal glaciers all in a bunch, and come to Pacifica, which is a disappointing dirty brown. But all eyes are already turning to Marjorie, an astonishing blue and white tapestry of ice capped with rugged peaks and juts. Every shade of blue: sapphire, indigo, cobalt, ultramarine. Flocks of kittiwigs swoop low after the larger calvings to feed on the fish that float to the surface, stunned by the falling rock and ice. These are all immense glaciers, but they are underachievers compared to Hubbard, which is still ahead.

Hubbard is U-shaped and so wide—six miles—that it seems to wrap itself around *Starship*. It is three to four hundred feet high—that's thirty or forty floors up in a skyscraper—and 92 miles long, an immensity of snow, ice, rock, and pulverized glacier dust. If you listen carefully you hear a continuous background cracking sound. This is known as "ice sizzle," or less euphoniously as "berg seltzer." We pull up to maybe 150 yards from Hubbard and mosey around slowly for a couple of hours; the harbor seals sitting on pan ice and recently liberated bergs in front of Hubbard pay us no mind. A roar, a cracking, a thunderous rumble and it looks as if the whole face of Hubbard is moving. This will be a major calving. Three hundred feet of ice and dirt tumble forward into the water, setting up a tidal wave, pushing the seals and the free-floating bergs before it.

Sitka, our last stop, is different. It was born a hundred years before the Gold Rush, a fur-trading post that became the capital of Russian Alaska. It has a settled look, unlike Ketchikan, Skagway, and Haines. We visit St. Michael's Russian Orthodox Church (recently rebuilt after a fire), take a botanical tour of the countryside, and enjoy a performance by the Archangel Russian Folk Dancers. Sitka is beautifully situated, cradled by crested mountains and fronting on the long-dormant volcano Mt. Edgecome, about which a story. The winters can be long here, and Sitka's merry pranksters, the Dirty Dozen, on a cold New Year's Eve not so long ago, hauled tires to the summit of Mt. Edgecome, poured gasoline over them, and lit them, staging a mini volcanic eruption. Panic in Sitka, followed by a night in jail for the chief prankster.

At Sitka's fine little Sheldon Jackson Museum there is a twenty-minute Totem Walk through a rain forest where totem poles brought from deserted Indian villages are spotted here and there in the woods. One of them is passing strange. It is capped not by the traditional eagle or raven, but by two overcoated gents with top hats—representing night watchmen.

"You will see a great deal of nature in Alaska," Dave Barry, the humorist, wrote after a recent visit. Nature, to be sure, but much more besides in this bleak and beautiful land where the call of the wild remains as strong as in Jack London's day. □

BOOKS IN BRIEF

John Cheever: A Biography, by Scott Donaldson (Random House, 359 pp., $22.50)

SCOTT DONALDSON'S biography of John Cheever is a competent, if overly cautious, account of a writer who careened both in life and in fiction between light and dark, grace and sin, elegance and pathos. Cheever never set out to prove that "a writer could have a family, a job, and even live in a suburb." But somewhere along the way, things just got too complicated. There were the paralyzing lows in self-esteem, the affairs with both men and women, and, of course, the drinking. Cheever was always "the brightest person in the room," one acquaintance observes, "until ten o'clock when he fell over drunk." John

Cheever was a poor student, and at the age of 18 he was thrown out of the Thayer Academy. Shortly thereafter he wrote a story, called "Expelled," which was printed in *The New Republic*. Cheever moved to New York and spent the rest of his life there: shuttling back and forth between the city, his home in Ossining, and the upstate writers' colony Yaddo. Although an acknowledged master of his craft, Cheever usually received mixed reviews. He was nagged at for being "a *New Yorker* writer"; his collections were perceived as uneven; and he never managed to write a novel that made everybody happy. In 1984, Susan Cheever published an exceptional memoir of her father, called *Home before Dark*. Donaldson's work is a more precise and reliable account, but it is written with none of the force or candor of Miss Cheever's. She quotes extensively from her father's journals and letters; Donaldson often bogs down in lengthy biographical readings of various novels and stories. For Donaldson, John Cheever is a man starved for love and recognition. He watches while his friends Updike and Bellow bound up the literary ladder; he is terrified of becoming "the lonely man eating in a Chinese restaurant." Ultimately, Donaldson's biography reads like a generic parable of the disillusioned writer. Donaldson charges Cheever with uncertainty, excess, and infidelity, but in the end he equivocates: "John's good deeds surely outweigh his transgressions." Ideally, *John Cheever: A Biography* should be read alongside *The Stories of John Cheever*, lest Donaldson's flat-footed prose make one forget that his subject is a writer whose stories are graceful, hilarious, and terrifying. As Donaldson puts it, John Cheever was, if nothing else, a man "constitutionally unable to write a mediocre line." JEFF GILES

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SAN FRANCISCO BAY AREA lady: divorced, 40s, unencumbered, attractive, athletic. Seeks gentleman with sense of humor who is looking for a great companion for sports, cooking, travel, theater. Photo please. NR Box 6135.

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GORBACHEV'S TRIUMPH

NEW YORK, DEC. 16

IT WAS AN ironic masterstroke—Mikhail Gorbachev rushing home from New York to superintend humane aid for the afflicted Armenians, struck by one of the worst earthquakes in the century. Initial estimates spoke of twenty thousand dead, but the figure quickly climbed, and at the end of the second day, Moscow was talking about the possibility that it would reach eighty thousand. Multiply that highest estimate by 15, and you reach the number of men, women, and children killed by the government of the Soviet Union in Afghanistan, which next March will have been four years under the command of—Mikhail Gorbachev.

Earthquakes are the act of an inscrutable God. The genocide in Afghanistan is the act of political man. And the retreat from Afghanistan is the result not of dismay over the killing of the incremental Afghan civilian, but of exhaustion: defeat. The Western world hails the altruistic instincts of Mr. Gorbachev, interrupting his triumphal tour in order to console the survivors of what by Soviet standards was a mini-holocaust; for which he was not responsible. The major slaughter for which he has been directly responsible receives no negative attention. More Afghans have been killed, by panicked Soviet military in retreat, during the past month than in any other month since the Soviet retreat began.

And another arresting coincidence. The same day that Gorbachev spoke to the United Nations and promised peace and "predictability" and "continuity" by the offer to cut down the size of his armed forces by 10 per cent by the end of 1991, and to reduce his conventional military preponderance in tanks (from 3 to 1 to 2.5 to 1), Yasir Arafat met with five American Jewish leaders in Stockholm under the auspices of the Swedish government. Arafat promised, in effect, to turn over a new leaf: he would absolutely recognize the legitimacy of Israel and forswear the use of terror. Gorbachev's popularity soared to all-time highs. He was toasted and all but publicly embraced by the leader of the Western world, and his approval rating in West Germany climbed to 70 per cent. Arafat's approach to a fresh start in the Mideast was scorned by the government of Israel as so much diplomatic buncombe, and the American Jewish leaders who traveled to Stockholm were widely criticized by Jewish leaders in America and in Israel as dupes for Palestinian propaganda.

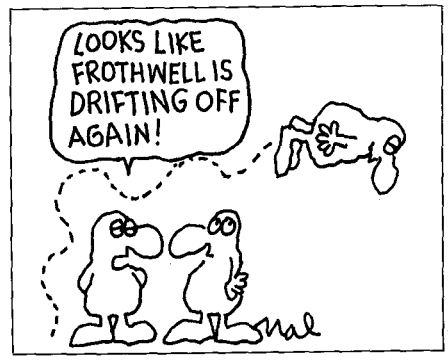
Now we do not know, do we? whether Arafat really means it about Israel. But we don't even ask the question about Poland. We are determined to help Israel retain its independence, to which end we spend billions and fashion our diplomatic strategy. Who ever thought to demand of Gorbachev that Poland should be free? As far as Western diplomacy is concerned, we are willing to treat Poland as an internal problem of the Soviet Union. Also Estonia, and what is left of Armenia.

And then, through the diapasonal chords of Mr. Gorbachev's ode to peace, the trained ear hears certain old, dominant tones. We must proceed with START, the program of nuclear reduction. The effect of across-the-board nuclear reduction is always to the disadvantage of the superpower unlikely to initiate a first strike. And we must abide by the ABM treaty. Abiding by the ABM treaty is Soviet shorthand for denying ourselves the testing in space of technology designed to protect us from random nuclear missiles from *n*th-power nations and to render, ultimately, a first strike by the Soviet Union inconceivable. The Soviets have never for one moment strayed from their goal of dismantling our Strategic Defense Initiative, and the march together taken by Mr. Reagan and Mr. Gorbachev toward peace in our time is designed to further that effort.

And designed above all to weaken the Western Alliance. Already West Germany is complaining about the 3 per cent of its GNP devoted to its military. Gorbachev might well be willing to tear down the wall in Berlin in return for the effective dismantling of NATO.

All of which is brilliant diplomacy. What especially irks is the ease with which the Soviet Union's weakness has manipulated Western weakness. Because totalitarian socialism is a total mess, the USSR is driven to cautious retreats here and there, and these are now parlayed into vigorous attacks on Western strategic arrangements. We appear ready to eliminate half our nuclear weapons, scrap SDI, enfeeble NATO, abandon any hope for Eastern European liberation, all in exchange for the reduction of the Red Army by 500,000 men. By 1991. (We demobilized eight million men in one year after the fall of Japan.)

What the U.S. could do if only Israel managed our foreign policy! □



FELLOW-TRAVELING LIVES

NEW YORK, DEC. 12

THE WASHINGTON TIMES, the indispensable daily in Washington that keeps its eyes open round the clock for mischievous activity, published a few days before Mr. Gorbachev's arrival an account by the *New York Post*'s Eric Breindel of what one might call avant-garde anti-anti-Communism. In a way, what happened at Harvard might be thought of as an aperitif offered to Gorbachev on his visit here. The three-day forum, called "Anti-Communism and the United States: History and Consequences," was an examination of the pathology of U.S. anti-Communism. Granted, its principal celebrants could be called pro-Communists. Some of them are explicit Communists; and others are of a chilly disposition on the matter of Communism. They simply don't much care how many people live in Gulag.

Professor Joel Kovel announced to the assembly of 1,200 that "anti-Communism is an exploitation of the deep structures of racism for the exploitation of the workers." Alger Hiss could not have put it better, in one of those clandestine conversations with Whittaker Chambers when both of them were stealing secrets for Stalin. And what

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do you know: Joel Kovel is the "Alger Hiss Professor of Sociology" at Bard College. Well, Bard College certainly got the right man, and if the early Paul de Man had been around, Bard College could have got itself a good Adolf Hitler Professor of Linguistics.

Now Professor Kovel was addressing some out-and-out Communists. You cannot be more out-and-out than Gus Hall, who is the General Secretary of the Communist Party U.S.A. Or than Angela Davis, who ran for Vice President of the United States on the Communist Party ticket and went to Harvard fresh from her labors at Dartmouth, where she was the key speaker at the celebration of Dartmouth coeducation, giving her an opportunity to denounce America in terms Gorbachev nowadays avoids. Jack O'Dell, the longtime pro-Communist associate of Jesse Jackson, was there, and said that anti-Communism "is the ideology of hatred that has been the spinoff of the big lie about the Soviet Union." And Leonard Boudin, the pro-Communist lawyer whose daughter grew up dynamiting buildings on behalf of the revolution. And the meeting was dedicated to the memory of Sean MacBride, who took with him to whatever world he now inhabits the Lenin Peace Prize.

But this wasn't just the old Red gang. Among the participants were John Kenneth Galbraith, William Styron, and Julian Bond. A book could be written (has been written?) about the difficulties Mr. Styron has in writing and thinking rationally about political questions: hugely talented people often have that trouble, and one is disposed to forgive the author of *The Confessions of Nat Turner* if he spends the rest of his time slipping on banana peels and mixing up anti-Communist activity with fascism and the lot. Julian Bond has never quite managed to train his mind, with the result that one doesn't know what to expect from him. For John Kenneth Galbraith there is simply no excuse. It is, unhappily, one more piece of evidence of a lifetime's insouciance to the physical, moral, and spiritual pain brought by the Communist movement to hundreds of millions of people. Every welfare measure endorsed by JKG, every socialist advance he applauds, do not together compensate for 1 per cent of the human misery caused by the Soviet Union, whose misdeeds he is so indifferent to. For Mr. Galbraith the glamor of socialism in any form simply takes over. He visited Mao's China in the middle of the Cultural Revolution and came back criticizing only excessive cigarette smoking by Mao-men.

This crowd of intellectuals brooked no nonsense about the new party line, which is that anti-Communism is an American disease. When Carl Bernstein, the co-author of the Watergate books and formerly one of the *Washington Post*'s top investigative reporters, ventured that the American press is in fact free and independent and isn't a participant in any anti-Soviet conspiracy, he was roundly booed. That used to happen, in 1947 and 1948, when at meetings of the Progressive Citizens of America dissenters would suggest that maybe Stalin did have a hand in the rape of Czechoslovakia: reactionary fascists who thought such bourgeois thoughts were simply shut out. It is probable that, during the Moscow spring, which may prove as short-lived as Prague's spring, there is more freedom of dissent within the Presidium of the Communist Party than within such assemblies as gathered at Harvard University. □

LENNY EXPLAINS

NEW YORK, OCT. 31

WHEE!—just like that. On Sunday morning, in the *New York Times*, Leonard Bernstein called out loud on Mike Dukakis to stop all this silence about the L-word and come right out with it. "I dreamed I heard Michael S. Dukakis say, 'I am proud to be called a liberal.'" And, hours later, Mr. Dukakis said just that. For the very first time, after more than one year's campaigning. Leonard Bernstein is a happy man today.

Now in the course of stamping his foot in protest against Mr. Dukakis's coyness on the subject of liberalism, Mr. Bernstein informed his readers about what liberalism really is and how close we have come in America to losing it. "George Washington was a revolutionary, as were Jefferson and Franklin. . . . All these forefathers were therefore liberals." Well, as a matter of fact, these gentlemen were not really revolutionaries: they were secessionists. And none of them was a liberal in the sense in which the word is currently used. Jefferson is the man who said that that government is best which governs least.

The liberals are mad not only at the failure of Dukakis et al. to use the L-word, they are also mad at the depreciation of the word. "Liberal," says Mr. Bernstein, "is a word soiled by the greedy, reactionary, backward-looking impulse toward tyranny." Gee whiz. That means Ronald Reagan is all those things, a lot more. But one must render this in the florid language of the same man who does so much with a Mahler symphony. He sees himself with 110 players bending to his inspiration, when he writes:

"Tyranny? In our free, beautiful, democratic republic? Yes. It is possible, and even probable, which is why we must constantly guard against it. Tyranny assumes many forms. To tax the factory workers and the outright poor so that the rich can get richer is tyranny. To call for war at the drop of a pipeline, . . . to teach jingoistic slogans about armaments and Star Wars" (etc.—there is much more ornamentation in the original) "—these are all forms of tyranny."

Mr. Bernstein tells us the nearest we ever got to tyranny was in the days of Senator Joe McCarthy. He does not, in his feverish essay, devote one sentence to discussing tyranny under Communism or the efforts of those who have labored to contain that tyranny.

That's their problem, that lack of focus; the kind of thing that led Jimmy Carter to warn against our "inordinate fear of Communism" at about the time genocide was going on in Cambodia.

The most agitated Leonard Bernstein has been throughout his public lifetime was in January 1970. He threw a big cocktail party for the Black Panthers in New York. The Panthers, you will recall, were a group of revolutionaries whose planted axiom was that the United States was racist and unjust, and had to be destroyed. Their leader rejoiced over the assassination of Robert Kennedy, featuring a picture of him lying in a pool of his own blood, his face transformed to the likeness of a pig. At Mr. Bernstein's luxurious apartment, his guests were lectured by Black Panther Donald Cox, who began by announcing that if business didn't provide full employment, then the Panthers would simply take over the means of production and put them in the hands of the people, to which prescription Mr. Bernstein's reply was, "I dig absolutely."

YOU GET THE sinking feeling that Lenny does not realize that one of the reasons the L-word is discredited is that it was handled over the years by such as Leonard Bernstein, with his dislocated perspectives. The liberals were easy prey for the Black Panthers. Tom Wolfe caught it all definitively when he wrote about "Mau-Mauing the Flak Catchers": "There was one genius in the art of confrontation who had mau-mauing down to what you could term a laboratory science. He had it figured out so he didn't even have to bring his boys downtown in person. He would just show up with a crocus sack full of revolvers, ice picks, fish knives, switchblades, hatchets, blackjacks, gravity knives, straight razors, hand grenades, blow guns, bazookas, Molotov cocktails, tank rippers, unbelievable stuff, and he'd dump it all out on somebody's shiny walnut conference table. He'd say, 'These are some of the things I took off my boys last night . . .'"

And the nubile liberals would do their little shuffle, digging it all, as Lenny digs liberalism. But he will go back to music soon, as Michael Dukakis will go back to the John F. Kennedy School of Government. □

(Universal Press Syndicate)

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RECENT TIMES HERALD EDITORIAL

TRANS-O-GRAM / KEM PUTNEY

DEFINITIONS

A. Rumination — REFLECTION (125 58 157 17 137 101 90 2 35 177)

B. Trespass — ENCROACH (114 45 163 126 26 79 173 57)

C. Often used as a cemetery — CHURCHYARD (118 212 100 30 71 88 5 152 167 76)

D. Cause a pinko to turn red? — EMBARRASS (168 131 25 73 11 119 44 190 82)

E. State in central U.S. (2 words) — NORTH DAKOTA (105 156 55 170 21 148 7 80 184 65 / 161)

F. The trees stop here (2 words) — TIMBERLINE (56 70 111 136 10 171 38 24 96 187)

G. Artist whose subjects are clocks? — TIMEFRAMER (143 132 51 206 158 185 42 4 155 117)

H. Action contrary to one's rights — INJUSTICE (164 32 140 153 178 91 127 12 183)

I. Chinese game (var.) — MAHJONG (27 115 49 1 95 139 182)

J. Meringue ingredient (2 words) — EGGWHITE (204 186 43 109 59 175 122 29)

K. State in central U.S. (2 words) — SOUTH DAKOTA (97 110 141 214 66 33 89 78 198 174 / 124)

L. Norwegian seaport, and a carpenter's delight — HAMMERFEST (195 179 69 3 54 113 145 22 130 87)

M. Communion — EUCHARIST (128 189 151 46 61 8 81 169 98)

N. Clint Eastwood vehicle — RAWHIDE (201 13 209 134 85 62 41)

O. Mishap — ACCIDENT (165 94 15 144 208 60 36 135)

P. Eggnog is one — LIBATION (166 116 149 31 68 50 104 180)

Q. Land at sea — DITCH (86 67 211 123 192)

R. One kind of dam — EARTHEN (200 207 34 102 203 18 162)

S. Causing disharmony — DIVISIVE (19 146 199 64 154 196 53 93)

T. Midwestern state — INDIANA (172 160 39 213 120 14 84)

U. Idea — THOUGHT (48 191 106 77 133 205 20)

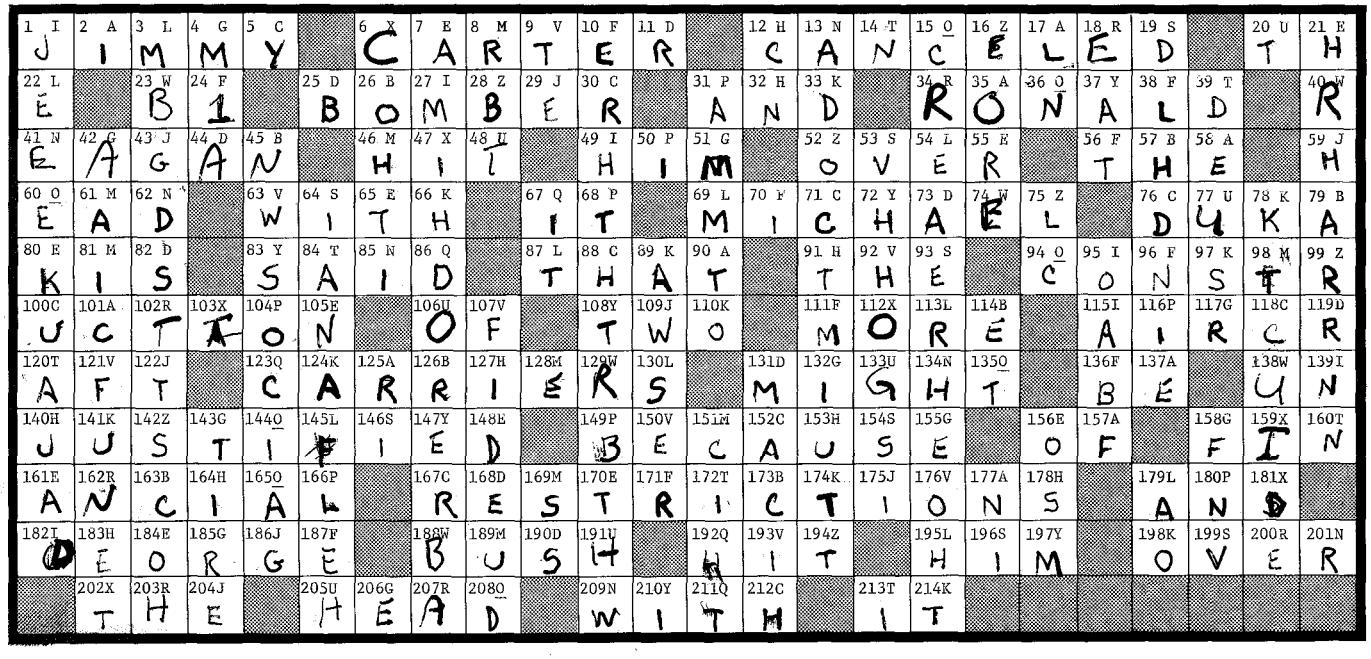
V. Popular paint "color" (hyph.) — OFF-WHITE (176 107 121 63 92 193 9 150)

W. Part of the pitcher's mound — RUBBER (129 138 23 188 74 40)

X. Foolish — IDIOTIC (103 181 47 112 202 159 6)

Y. Godless "religion" — ATHEISM (37 108 72 147 210 83 197)

Z. Seafood delicacy — LOBSTER (75 52 28 142 194 16 99)



DIRECTIONS

The object of TRANS-O-GRAM is to fill in the puzzle diagram by guessing the words from their definitions, and transferring each letter of the guessed word to the correspondingly numbered square in the diagram. When the diagram is filled in it will spell out a quotation from some published work (reading normally from left to right, black boxes indicating the ends of words); also, when the words have all been filled in above, their initial letters will spell out the author and title of the quoted work. The acrostic feature, and the relative word-lengths in the diagram, will assist in the solution. Spelling and definitions on the authority of *Webster's New International Dictionary*, Second Edition. **See page 68 for solution to last Trans-O-Gram.**

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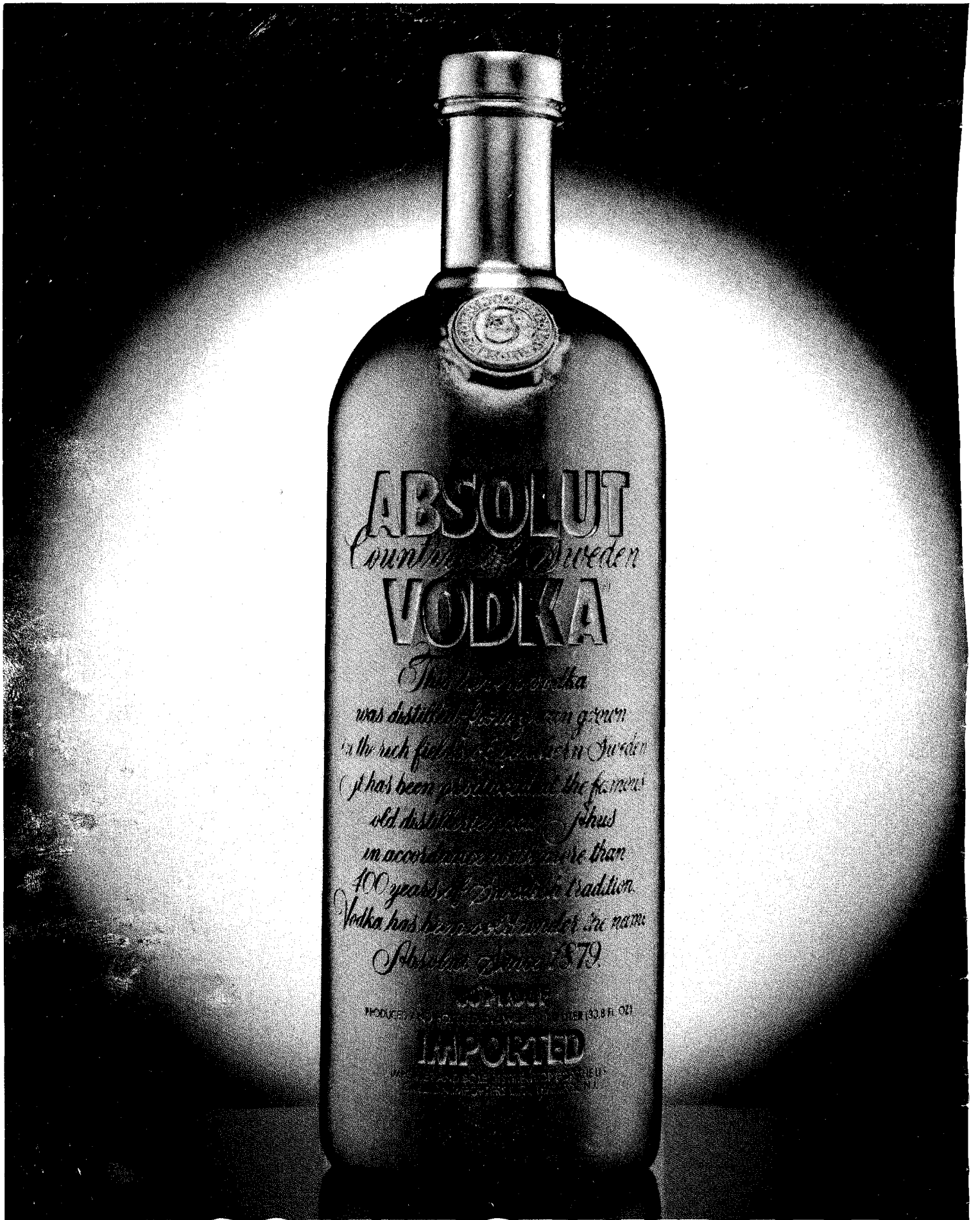

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